



Backstreets

The Boss Magazine
#78 FALL/WINTER 2003

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Big Finish

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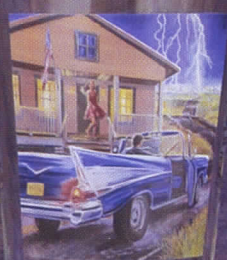
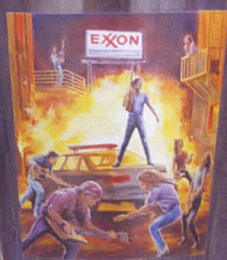
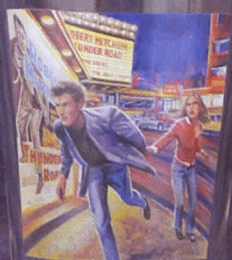
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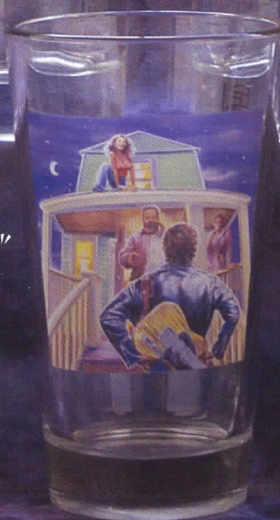
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ME AND TERRY
BECAME FRIENDS"

Jungleland

"THE HUNGRY
AND THE HUNTED
EXPLODE INTO
ROCK 'N' ROLL
BANDS"

Thunder road

"FROM YOUR FRONT PORCH
TO MY FRONT SEAT
THE DOOR'S OPEN
BUT THE RIDE
IT AIN'T FREE"

Rosalita
(Come Out Tonight)

"I'M COMIN' TO
LIBERATE YOU,
CONFISCATE YOU,
I WANT TO BE
YOUR MAN"

Kitty's Back

"WELL, WHO'S THAT
DOWN AT THE END
OF THE ALLEY?
SHE'S BEEN GONE
SO LONG"

The E Street
Shuffle

"LITTLE ANGEL
STEPS THE SHUFFLE
LIKE SHE
AIN'T GOT
NO BRAINS"

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Backstreets

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CON TENTS

FALL/WINTER 2003

#78 Vol. 20, No. 2

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FEATURES

JUST AROUND THE CORNER

The Fourth Annual Light of Day Benefit for Parkinson's lures Bruce Springsteen back to the Stone Pony.

By Lisa Iannucci.18

ONCE MORE AROUND! THE RISING TOUR PART IV

The *Rising* tour returns to North America for a summer stadium tour, where it's *one! two! three! four!* at the old ballgame. By Christopher Phillips, Robert Bader, and the readers of *Backstreets*.21

TWANG & TRUST

The *Backstreets* Interview with Shane Fontayne: a ten-year retrospective on the 1992-'93 tour with Bruce's guitar slinger from those years, a right-hand man striking out on his own. By Christopher Phillips.48

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS

To the Editors of *Backstreets*.4

ON THE BACKSTREETS

The Politics of Dancing in the Dark.

By Andrew E. Massimino.6

IN THE NEWS

4th Street Freeze-out: The Bottom Line in trouble.7

ON DISC

My Best? Good Enough. Erik Flannigan on *Essential*.8

ON STAGE

"Jersey Girl" comes to MDA Gala; Springsteen wins the 2003 Les Paul award.10

ON LIPS

Bada-Bing! And other action on E Street and off.13

IN REVIEW

Talking Back to the Boss: *Bruce Springsteen's America*. By Roderick Jones.14

GREETINGS FROM ASBURY PARK

Mad Dogs & Jerseymen: Vini Lopez carries the Steel Mill flame. By Robert Makin.16

ON COLLECTING

Reviews of the latest Bruce boots by Fred Mills;

"Burning Down the Road" by Flynn McLean.60

CLASSIFIEDS

Pen pals, messages, and tapes.63

COVER

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

7/21/03, East Rutherford, NJ

Deb Carvalho Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

8/16/03, San Francisco, CA

Margaret Mish Photo

LETTERS

I'LL BUY

Dear Editor:

Debating the merits of the track selection of the new *Essential* collection is as pointless as wondering why "Bobby Jean" continues to pollute the occasional encore. It is as pointless as disc three of *Essential*, which is a disconcerting hodge-podge of material with no coherent thread. At least put all the live tracks in one cluster, for chrissakes.

But I digress.

One thing not up for debate when it comes to *Essential* is the way the collection beautifully illustrates the need for the remastering the Boss' back catalog. The old stuff sounds amazing here, as opposed to the horrid analog transfers we all own. I'm sorry, you vinyl war horses, those of us born after 1925 like digital music. If I want unclear, muddy mixes, I'll go downtown and purchase ten LPs for a quarter.

In all honesty, from *Greetings* through *The River*, is there another artist with a worse sounding back catalog? And wouldn't a remastering project fit right in with the current strategy of record execs? New music is not selling, (not because everybody is downloading it, but because it sucks), and so the record companies keep turning to tried-and-true stuff like greatest hits collections and Beatles releases.

So remaster the Boss catalog and we'll all buy it—for the third or fourth time, depending upon your age and whether you moved from LP to cassette to CD like many of us did. Record company shills get their jack, and we get our music in appropriate sound quality. Everybody wins.

Doug Baker
Dublin, OH

I.O.U. NOTHING

Dear Editor:

As Bruce so eloquently puts it, "You have to learn to live with what you can't rise above." I'm talking about complaints from fans regarding "all" the errors in the *Essential* booklet and the *Live in Barcelona* DVD problems. DVD issues are one thing, but if I were Bruce and saw all the complaints

about misprints and errors, I would probably never release anything else. It seems you can't satisfy some Bruce fans with anything. To some, Bruce "owes" us an official release of concerts from each tour he's ever done and a release of any unreleased material (regardless of its quality). It wasn't that long ago that we thought we would never see an album with the E Street Band, much less two excellent DVDs in *Live in New York City* and *Barcelona*, plus what I think is an excellent representation of Bruce's career in *Essential*. Getting remastered versions of all the classics is worth the price even without the bonus disc, which itself is worth the purchase just for "From Small Things" and "None But the Brave." If fans showed a little more gratitude, rather than nit-picking song selection or minor flaws in liner notes, Bruce just may open up the vaults a little more and a little more often.

Randy Griffey
via e-mail

COLOR ME IMPRESSED

Dear Editor:

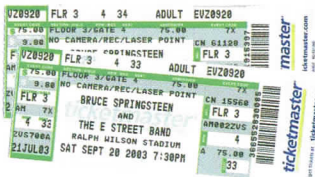
Having just read through the latest issue [#77], I got more and more thrilled with each turn of the page, noticing all the great color pictures featured throughout. Having attended the second night in Gothenburg, I had goosebumps just looking at the great picture of the Ullevi Stadium from that night. It wouldn't have been the same in dull black-and-white. The clear blue summer sky, the atmosphere in the pit, the lights, the big screens...

And it just struck me: what about all the other great color shots that must have been dropped on the cutting room floor throughout all the years of *Backstreets* magazine? So as you now seem to have turned on the color TV screen, I just thought

maybe you guys could put out an edition with great color shots of Bruce throughout the years. A color gallery of pictures that didn't see the light of day, from the early days through the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour, *Tunnel*, *The Ghost of Tom Joad* (awesome use of lighting on that tour!), and maybe even a couple from the odd years (1992-93). Bruce still looked just fine then too!

Asgeir Notvik
Norway

Glad you noticed—it's been a Wizard of Oz-ish kick to make the leap up to Technicolor, and we'll do our best to keep it up.



MERRY-GO-ROUND

Dear Editor:

I am attaching two magical Springsteen tickets. One day they were great floor seats at a football stadium in Buffalo, the next they were nosebleeds (sec. 403, row 13) at a Six Flags Theme Park.

Jerry Saffioti
via e-mail

KIDS DON'T FOLLOW

Dear Editor:

I had the good fortune to attend Bruce Springsteen's October 1 concert at Shea Stadium. It was the fourth show I have seen this summer and approximately the 24th over the past 22 years. It was unmistakably the most political of them all.

One of the qualities that make this nation great is our ability to have an open dialogue. I thank Mr. Springsteen for his "statement concert" at Shea. Having

graduated high school in 1981, I am grateful that there haven't been too many needs for statements during my adult life. But as a proud American, I am greatly concerned about the impact of President Bush's War in Iraq. As the father of two boys, I only wish they were old enough that I could have brought them to the concert. As Springsteen has suggested throughout the summer, his statement questioning our leaders was neither a Republican nor a Democratic statement but an American obligation. We must always question our leaders to ensure they are acting on our behalf.

Bruce was not critical of American soldiers. Before 50,000 spectators, Mr. Springsteen questioned our leaders for pushing our nation into the War in Iraq—not the soldiers serving in Iraq. It seems that some would have liked for Mr. Springsteen to play a rendition of Irving Berlin's "God Bless America," but what we got was a heartfelt cover of Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Who'll Stop the Rain"—and for that I am grateful.

Todd Middlebrook
via e-mail

LEFT OF THE DIAL

Dear Editor:

Thanks for issue #77, which arrived today. Usually your magazine fills me with happiness, but after reading the letters page there is a letter I must comment on.

As an American living in a foreign country, I am constantly challenged about American hypocrisy, which was demonstrated by a letter from Mark Pendergrast in the current issue. For you to disagree with the Dixie Chicks "joke" and Bruce's support for them, that is your right. However, your rights do not take precedence over another's (even a "highly compensated

Jesse Malin Interview

One of Springsteen's Holiday Show guests this year—a hell of a songwriter, performer, and yarn-spinner, whose album (*The Fine Art of Self Destruction*) we're told Bruce can't stop playing... and for good reason.

All this and more in #79, due in Spring 2004.

NEXT ISSUE

Rising Tour Wrap-up

Thought it was over? Sure, the magazine you hold in your hands takes care of the final summer leg. But despite this being our biggest single-issue ever, there's still a ton of tour coverage that we couldn't fit. With full stats,

additional color photos, guest interviews, "close encounters" and more, we'll take a grand-finale look at the Rising tour.

Holiday Shows

By the time you read these words, Springsteen and Friends will already have played December 5, 6, and 7 in Asbury Park. Full coverage, natch.

entertainer"). If people want to stop supporting an artist, entertainer, sports personality, or politician because of their opinions or personal behavior, to voice it is only to be accepted.

However, by attempting to organize a boycott, you seek to deny their right to express their opinions by ridiculing and intimidating them with protests; by trying to stop radio stations and stores from playing or stocking their records, you seek to financially penalize their actions. The real purpose behind actions like this seem to be not only to deny the Dixie Chicks the freedom you purport to defend, but to warn off others who share similar views from expressing them.

It seems to me that the backlash is not a grassroots protest, but orchestrated by vested-interest, corporate America (the advertisers whom Mark bows down to who have far too much influence in the world) and a hysterical media.

Bruce could well be in the same position in the very near future. If he speaks out about something that he feels strongly about, or even by some accidental slip says something that mainstream (i.e. corporate) America doesn't like, he could be labeled "Un-American" and face similar trouble.

It is a shame that in the United States in the 21st century "freedom of speech" appears to have conditions attached, and heaven help you if you step out of line.

Robert Spinrad
Gorebridge, Scotland
(by way of Detroit, MI)

UNSATISFIED

Dear Editor:

The Boss is getting way too political for me. I've been a huge fan since my first concert at the Monmouth Arts Center. Concerts and entertainment are an escape from all the daily bad news we are bombarded with—if I want news, I'll tune into CNN or FOX. If I want music, I want a show sans politics.

He started that rhetoric on the last tour with his "Republicanized" comments. Someone should inform Bruce that a lot of his audience is Republicanized—conservatives who can afford to buy his tickets, travel all, around

the country and fill the arenas and stadiums. If he wants his Socialist party as an audience, he better play for free. I've heard from a number of friends who are echoing my sentiments.

Al Brown
Asbury Park, NJ

SHOOTING DIRTY POOL

Dear Editor:

TicketMaster strikes again. The first 20 rows in section A and D suddenly have seats available for the three Philly shows that start tomorrow. Has anyone figured out how to circumvent Ticketbaster? When will the artists (read: Bruce) demand that tickets be made available to the public on a fair basis? I already have my seats to all three shows but would love to trade in without penalty!

Bob Morgan
via e-mail

SWINGIN' PARTY

Dear Editor:

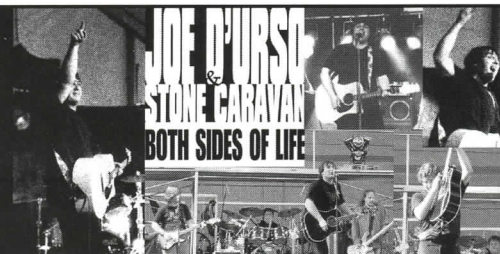
Congrats on another brilliant magazine—but I have one minor complaint (which could probably have been avoided if I had mailed earlier). I think you haven't given the exceptional concert in Milan enough credit. After seeing over 80 Bruce shows (all over Europe and four in New York in 2000), I have to say that the audience at the San Siro Stadium was by a large margin (and I've been to shows in Italy before) the most enthusiastic and fantastic audience I've ever seen.

With the exception of "Follow That Dream" they found parts in every song to sing or chant along to, regardless if that part contained lyrics or not. Some people said that the band was a bit more tired than in Sweden, for example. I can't comment on that as I missed out (sadly) on these shows. But it seemed to me that they were so overwhelmed by what was happening during the show that they sometimes slipped into an "autopilot" mode simply due to a slight lack of concentration.

Anyway, from all the shows I've seen, this tops everything—simply for the "experience" (not to mention the rain, which someone said was like standing in a

Continued page 62

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When the lights go out

The Politics of Dancing in the Dark

Wherever there's somebody fightin' for a
place to stand
Or a decent job, or a helppin' hand
Wherever somebody's strugglin' to be
free
Look in their eyes, Mom, you'll see me.
—Bruce Springsteen,
"The Ghost of Tom Joad"

By Andrew E. Massimino

"May the truth will out." Bruce Springsteen delivered a self-monikered Public Service Announcement to the crowds at his concerts this summer that said, in a nutshell, that we as citizens should look for and demand the truth from our elected leaders [see page 25]. The response from most seemed to be "Hey, good point, Bruce. We should be vigilant in our gathering of information and demand that it be truthful so that we can make informed decisions about the world in which we live." Or something like that, rolled up into various forms of "Hell yeah, Boss!" At most of the shows that I attended, some positive whooping could be heard over semi-enthusiastic applause. But wait, there was another sound in there, too. Why were people "Brooce-ing" in the middle of the PSA, sometimes drowning out parts of the speech? In reality, they weren't. At a number of shows this past summer, Springsteen heard a sound that may have seemed traditional to some, but I guarantee you that he could tell the difference: he got booed.

The Boss getting the Bronx cheer? Say it ain't so! But it was so, and it spread from the concert halls to the online chat rooms and message boards faster than you could name all three Dixie Chicks. Okay, so it wasn't the first time. After the controversy surrounding the Reunion Tour performances of "American Skin," Bruce learned that the same folks who boo and hiss on one song might cheer like mad on the next. Some of those who sat enraptured at Bruce's exten-

sive storytelling on past tours now feel compelled to yell "Shut up and play a damn song!" Go figure. So, what did Bruce fundamentally alter over the course of his 30-year relationship with his fans that would cause some to vehemently boo the man they just paid \$75 to hear? What is Springsteen saying to the masses in 2003 that is different or opposed to what he has been preaching all along? People get ready, 'cause the answer is... not a damn thing.

If you booed Bruce Springsteen during his nightly PSA, or were one of the folks who posted online that you hated how political Bruce has become—that he wouldn't be getting any more of your money since he's "gone liberal"—well mister, you just haven't been paying attention. If you announced to your corner of the world that you were done with Springsteen, that you were hopping off the train after 20-some-odd years because of this, I'm here to tell you brother, you weren't ever on this train to begin with.

On the evening of November 5, 1980, one day after Ronald Reagan swept the Presidential election, Bruce Springsteen looked out at his Arizona audience and said, "I don't know what you guys think about what happened last night, but I think it's pretty frightening. You guys are young—there's gonna be a lot of people depending on you comin' up, so this is for you." The post-script then, and I would argue that it remains, seemed to be, "Now, listen to my songs, and figure it out for yourself." He went right into a ferocious ver-

sion of "Badlands," the one that appears on *Live/1975-85*. This method—of drawing an outline with a few comments then filling in the colors and shades with his songs—has been consistent throughout Springsteen's career. After Bruce's most recent statement of vigilance he played either "Land of Hope and Dreams" or "Born in the U.S.A." The former seemed to suggest that we should strive for better because we can do better. The latter was a bit more powerful, a direct reminder—reminiscent of 1985's "War"—of what blind

faith in government can bring.

**Call it whatever you want—
the powerless vs. the powerful,
the hungry vs. the overfed,
those caught in the system vs.
those pulling the strings—
Bruce has been consistent
since day one.**

Those who are thrown by Springsteen's PSA have not acknowledged his carefully chosen social commentary all along. Everything is political. Just ask Bob Dylan, we live in a political world. Most of the organizations and charities with which Bruce has publicly aligned himself—M.U.S.E., the Vietnam Veterans of America, Amnesty International, the Christic Institute, and even local food banks—have political qualities or implications that affect the social fabric of this country.

In my opinion, however, this is not an ideological war between liberals and conservatives. But let's at least agree that over the years most fans have grown to realize that Bruce's politics tend to lean left. We all know the story of how Reagan tried to co-opt Bruce's *Born in the U.S.A.* image for his 1984 campaign. Springsteen had his say a few days later from the stage in Pittsburgh. Before delivering a powerful "Johnny 99," he wondered "what [Reagan's] favorite album

must've been. I don't think it was the *Nebraska* album. I don't think he's been listening to this one."

Still, I don't think it's ever been about Democrat vs. Republican, left wing vs. right wing. For Bruce Springsteen, I believe it's always been about the battle of the human spirit. Call it whatever you want—the powerless vs. the powerful, the hungry vs. the overfed, those caught in the system vs. those pulling the strings—but he has been consistent since day one. Maybe he feels a bit more urgency now; maybe having kids in this post-9/11 madness invigorates his desire to spell it out a bit more clearly.

As the 2003 summer tour gathered momentum and Springsteen became more familiar with the speech that rolled across his TelePrompTer each night, he seemed to want to add more to the story. One night in August he informed the audience that if they wanted to read a funnier version of what he just said they should read Al Franken's *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right*. (We can put that book next to *A Pocket History of the United States, Bound for Glory, The Grapes of Wrath, and Journey to Nowhere*—all endorsed by Bruce from the concert stage and not exactly an apolitical reading list.) Anyone who pays attention to such things knows that Franken has morphed from "the Stuart Smalley guy" on *Saturday Night Live* to a prominent liberal pundit, a foil for the likes of Rush Limbaugh (side note: wouldn't it be great to see Stuart Smalley have Rush on to compare 12-steps? Doggone it, I'd like that!). Bruce went as far as to bring Franken out on stage during the band intros on October 3 in New York. It was playful, but they both had to know how it would appear to some: "I endorse Al Franken's ideology."

Earlier in the night, during the seemingly innocuous "Waitin' on a Sunny Day," Bruce kept imploring the crowd to sing louder for

The Bottom Line faces eviction 4th Street Freeze-out

By Christopher Phillips

In 1975, Bruce Springsteen played ten shows in five nights with the E Street Band at New York's Bottom Line, a monumental juncture in his rise to stardom. With the dual *Time* and *Newsweek* covers still a month away, the *New York Times* wrote of Springsteen at this stand, "he has one of the best rock bands anybody has ever heard, and he is as charismatic a stage figure as rock has ever produced." For anyone absent who might not have believed the hype, there was the awe-inspiring WNEW radio broadcast on August 15, 1975.

Three decades later, the doors of the Bottom Line will likely be closing for good. On December 3, after a lengthy rent dispute, the courts ruled in favor of the Greenwich Village club's landlord, New York University, and its request for a warrant of eviction; the club owed back rent approaching \$200,000.

Prior to this ruling, Springsteen was one of several to offer

financial support, saying, "When I think of the most memorable nights in my own career, few match the week of shows we did there in 1975. As a musician, as a citizen, and as one who loves New York City, I sincerely hope that a solution can be found that allows the Bottom Line and [owners] Allan [Pepper] and Stanley [Snadowsky] to continue their important, valuable work for many years to come."

Springsteen returned to the Bottom Line in 1992, to play before an audience with his new touring band for the first time. There's still hope that the club won't go the way of the '92-93

band; a reprieve remains a possibility as this issue of *Backstreets* goes to press. Check www.savethebottomline.com for the latest. 🐾

Hats off to the Bottom Line: Springsteen and the E Street Band's landmark stand, August 1975.



PHOTOS ©2003 JOHN SCHUCH

the chorus: "One more time if you wanna impeach the president!" He giggled, perhaps at his own instigating nature. Bruce has been around far too long not to know exactly what he's doing. When he introduces Clarence and says, "Let's get a man in the White House who knows how to handle this mess!" we all know it's ridiculous to suggest a Clemons ticket for 2004. But some conservatives in the crowd found Bruce's little dig at W. unnecessary, even offensive. Anybody with a computer and a phone line can instantly post their comments for the world to see, and on at least two right-wing web logs ("blogs") it was reported as fact: "Springsteen Calls for Impeachment of President Bush." Adding some fuel to his mischievous fire, Bruce later singled out the Vice President as well. In the middle of the PSA (in Boston, and later in Wash-

ington, DC and New York) when stating that all are welcome at the shows, Springsteen added with a sly grin, "except for Dick Cheney. I think that's where I draw the line."

Seven years ago, Springsteen expressed his personal political views during the 1996 campaign in California. He lent his voice, name, and time in an effort to defeat Proposition 209, a ballot initiative which was seen as a backhanded attempt to end affirmative action in that state. Attending a Los Angeles rally in late October of that year, he took the podium after the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Prior to playing "The Promised Land" he said, "I am here today because I believe it is very important to stop Proposition 209 in California. It's not a race and colorblind country—if you think so, then

there's a job for you over in Disneyland. Affirmative action has been an effective tool since the beginning." The people of California liked the music but not the words; the measure passed by an almost two-to-one margin. Bruce Springsteen resumed his tour in support of *The Ghost of Tom Joad* the following night.

Many took his participation—his taking-a-stand-activism—as some kind of "final clue" that Bruce Springsteen had come out of the liberal closet and was ready to throw his heavyweight stardom around in support of all kinds of liberal causes. I imagine he fielded a few phone calls. Instead, Springsteen continued downplaying his icon status, playing to 3,000-seat theaters and singing songs about displaced migrant farmers, the country's working poor, and others "left behind." The songs were quiet, the message was loud and

clear. Springsteen still cared about standing up for the little guy, giving a lift to the powerless, and shining a light on this world's inequities—more than he cared to embrace some grand political platform. Nobody wins unless everybody wins. It was that simple. And that hasn't changed, sir.

Earlier this year, Springsteen released a statement in support of the Dixie Chicks and their right to free speech. Addressed in this column in the last issue [*Backstreets* #77], his April 22 statement denounced the treatment those artists received for something as basic and American as speaking one's mind. Now he's speaking his: reminding us all of the duties of citizenship, the responsibilities that come with it, and the ever-growing importance of being vigilant about the truth.

Um... Boo? 🐾

My Best? Good Enough

By Erik Flannigan

A note on the inherent subjectivity of writing about remastering: While the credits to *Essential*, as well as Bruce's introductory note, mention Bob Ludwig's role in remastering the set, exactly how much change he effected on each song and much more importantly whether new sources were accessed (e.g. lower-generation tapes) isn't known to the author. Suffice it to say the entire set was remastered, but the differences yielded can range from subtle to significant. Readers should understand remastering itself is a subjective art and that the most dramatic differences we have heard on remastered CDs over the years are generally the result of better tapes primarily, and a skilled remastering hand with better tools secondarily. As such, what is written below purports to be no more than educated opinion. And even that's debatable.

When Bruce Springsteen opened his August 11 gig in Philadelphia with "From Small Things (Big Things One Day Come)," minutiae mavens from Long Branch to Long Beach were all scrambling to answer the same question: Why? The song—originally written and cut for *The River* in 1979 and later given to and recorded by Dave Edmunds—wasn't a complete unknown in Bruce live performance annals, but its dozen or so airings over the years were typically at club gigs. Was Edmunds in the Philadelphia crowd? Surely that or some other logical reason had prompted its inclusion as the set opener there and in the Giants Stadium encore on August 28. But three weeks later, when "County Fair"—the lost, ode-to-simpler-times aural postcard originally recorded for *Born in the U.S.A.* and not touched since—surfaced during the Buffalo show, something had to be up.

It is now safe to assume that Springsteen's seemingly spontaneous revisiting of these dusty-shelf chestnuts (not to mention the unexpected, late-tour airings of "Tunnel of Love," "Living Proof," and other dormant *Human Touch*/*Lucky Town* tracks) was spurred by the song selection

process for *Essential*, and specifically its third "bonus" disc of "rarities and previously unreleased tracks."

What eventually emerged on November 11 is a career-spanning collection that, a few quibbles aside (does "Mary's Place" really rank as one of Springsteen's truly essential tracks?), serves as a fine overview, primer, summation-to-date, or as Bruce calls it, "a little bit of what each album has to offer." Its accompanying bonus disc might appear at first glance to be something of a hodge-podge, but at least in the opinion of this long-time Springsteen critic, it holds together and plays with surprising cohesion, save for its final track. Throw in an annotated booklet (albeit with a few curious errors, see sidebar), lyrics to every song, remastering by Bob Ludwig and a low list price, and you've got a pretty good gift for the Bruce neophyte and long-timer alike.

The first wrong righted by *Essential* is its inclusion of five songs from the pre-1975 period ignored by *Greatest Hits*: "Blinded by the Light," "For You," "Spirit in the Night," "4th of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)," and "Rosalita (Come Out Tonight)." "Blinded by the Light" sounds freshly remastered indeed, with more vivid detail on the edges of the guitars and cymbals, while the hissy "For You" and slightly muffled "Spirit in the Night" lack such crispness and are presumably from the same source tapes as previous CDs. *Wild & Innocent* has always been a sonic gem with excellent stereo separation and lots of what mastering engineers call "air"; that holds true for the two tracks from it included here.

Material from *Born to Run* sounds as good as the most recent reissues of the album, while additional *Darkness* tracks—the album most often cited as being in desperate need of remastering—benefit from Ludwig's hand as did "Badlands" on *Greatest Hits*, packing considerably more punch and sharper detail than the current production CD of the album, though one might argue there's still a certain warmth missing that was evident in the best

vinyl pressings. Cuts from *The River* sound full and satisfying, losing some of the brightness that has always plagued CDs of the album. Disc one closes with "Nebraska" and "Atlantic City," both of which are cleaned up nicely, with greatly diminished hiss compared to early CD pressings (the mini-LP sleeve Japanese CD from 1999 also bore this improvement).

What's interesting about the sound of disc two is that from a mastering perspective, it's the first time "Dancing in the Dark," "Brilliant Disguise" and "Human Touch" sound like they could hail from the same album, at least as far as their sonic signature. "Born in the U.S.A." remains a bit harsh and bright for my taste (perhaps intentionally) and could use a bit more bass oomph (indulgent aside: I could say that about a lot of tracks, hell entire CDs—what did Garry Tallent ever do to piss off Bob Ludwig?), but "Glory Days" and "Dancing in the Dark" sound great. "Tunnel of Love" is the pleasant surprise here, brought into even sharper focus (compare the acoustic guitar in the song's long introduction to the same passage on the production CD) than I would have thought possible given it's all-digital master recording. And so clear is "Living Proof" that one can almost listen specifically to the vocal effect separate from the voice in the song's first 45 seconds or so. Then again, I haven't played *Lucky Town* in a while through headphones.

Heard in this context, one gains new appreciation for the rich, nuanced recording of "The Ghost of Tom Joad" which sounds exquisite here. Curiously, much of the instrument separation and sonic detail so evident across disc two disappears in cuts from Bruce's most recent recording, *The Rising*. The change in production style and recording technique is unmistakable, as definition gives way to density ("Lonesome Day" being the best example), and the sound of the whole becomes bigger than the sum of the parts. It's the most "live" sounding Springsteen recording since *The River*.

It is difficult to speculate as to the criteria behind song choices on disc three, at least in terms of the unreleased material. Rounding up soundtrack ("Dead Man Walkin'," "Lift Me Up," "Missing"), compilation ("Viva Las Vegas," "Trapped"), and B-side rarities ("The Big Payback") is good house-keeping and good listening. The three mid-to-late '90s soundtrack tunes would make a compelling EP, and one suspects there are more moody, experimental tracks where these came from, all of which I find considerably more interesting than most of the mid-'90s material that debuted on *Tracks*' disc four (though *Mojo*'s Phil Sutcliffe disagrees with me in his December 2003 buying guide piece on Bruce). "Viva" and "Payback" are both lots o' fun (I especially love Springsteen's loud-soft vocal in the latter), while the reinvention of Jimmy Cliff's "Trapped" is one of his greatest performance moments, period, and deserves wider availability than the *USA For Africa: We Are the World* benefit album.

The sonics of disc three aren't the story so much as the songs themselves. That said, the live "Held Up Without a Gun" must be singled out for its sub-par quality (was it pulled from cassette?) compared to the rest of the set, and one has to wonder why the original studio recording (released as the B-side to "Hungry Heart," still available only on vinyl) wasn't used. Comparing *Essential*'s "Held Up" to other tracks from the Uniondale 1980 stand as included on *Live/1975-85* reveals just how much post-production work went into that live box. Welcome back, Max's snare. Goodbye, sample trigger.

Likewise, a glaring drop in sound quality for "County Fair" marks it as taken from a sub-par source. Five years ago, additional studio outtakes were considered for inclusion on *Tracks* before it was trimmed, as legend has it, from six discs' worth of material to four. Judging by the sonics of "From Small Things (Big Things One Day Come)" and "None But the Brave,"

Guitar: \$15,000... "Jersey Girl": Priceless

Bruce plays MDA Gala

Atlantic City's Boardwalk Hall and East Rutherford's Giants Stadium weren't the only two venues to be treated to "Jersey Girl" this year. Add

Aberdeen's Garden Manor to that list. On November 8, Springsteen and Patti Scialfa attended the Phil Villapiano Field of Hope Gala fundraiser

there for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. In addition to contributing to a live auction, Bruce threw in some live music as well, sitting in with the Private Affair Band on the Tom Waits-penned classic.

The band's Joey La talked to *Backstreets* about giving up his guitar for the Boss.

"We were playing just a lot of cover tunes—some new music and some older classic rock songs. Bruce was pretty much preoccupied with people talking

to him and taking pictures with him, but he did listen up when we started doing an 'unplugged' segment of music with just a single guitar. He came up to the dance floor when they started to auction off a guitar he signed, and he walked around holding it as the bids came."

The signed guitar finally went for \$15,000. After the auction, La says, "he just walked over to me, motioned for me to hand him my guitar, and he strapped it on. Everybody gathered around him calling out requests. Someone asked for 'Secret Garden,' and he laughed, 'Nah, I don't know that one!' Then he said, 'I'll give you 'Jersey Girl.'"

Was the band ready for that? "We've done that song many times, so it was no problem," explains La. "The only thing that bugged me: after I strapped on my other guitar and plugged into an older amp I bring as a backup, it started making static noises when I played riffs behind him. So I was held back as to what I really wanted to play—I had to play real lightly so as not to make those noises—but regardless, it was a great thrill."

—Christopher Phillips



Springsteen wins 2003 Les Paul Award

By Ruth Barohn

The 19th Annual Technical Excellence & Creativity (TEC) Awards took place in New York on October 11, with Bruce Springsteen among the honorees. The TEC Awards, which recognize the achievements of audio professionals, handed out 24 awards along with two special honors. One, induction into the TEC Hall of Fame, was bestowed upon acclaimed engineer Eddie Kramer; the other, the Les Paul Award, was given to Bruce Springsteen.

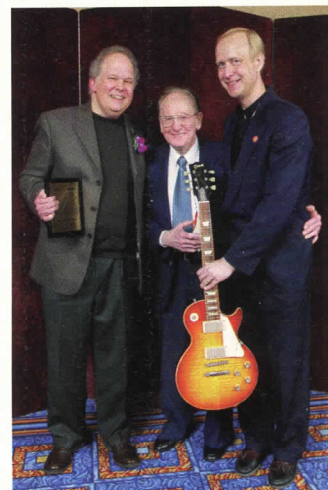
The Les Paul Award, named for the creator of the electric guitar, was created in 1991 to honor

individuals or institutions that have set the highest standards in excellence in the creative application of recording technology. The presenters of the award were mastering veteran Bob Ludwig and Les Paul himself.

After a video presentation summarizing several of the major accomplishments of Springsteen's career, Ludwig beamed, saying, "I'm one of his biggest fans. Bruce is first and foremost a poet, a man of great integrity and it's a pleasure to work with him."

Although Springsteen was not in attendance to accept the honor, he did send a letter to be read, thanking the production

team he has worked with for years: "I would especially like to thank all those who have helped make my records sound like my music: producer Chuck Plotkin, engineer Toby Scott, mixing engineer Bob Clearmountain, producer Brendan O'Brien, engineer Nick Didia, and master engineer Bob Ludwig. They have brought a craft, commitment, and artistry to my records, and I am thrilled to be able to acknowledge their contributions here tonight." The letter concluded with a special message of gratitude to Les Paul, saying, "Thanks to Gibson and to Les Paul for the Les Paul guitar—it's just what I needed."



Presenting the 2003 TEC Awards Les Paul Award (L to R): Mastering Engineer Bob Ludwig, Les Paul, and Gibson chairman and CEO Henry Juszkiewicz.

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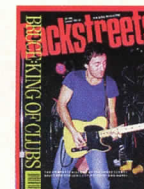
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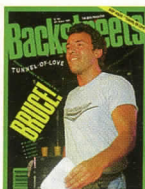
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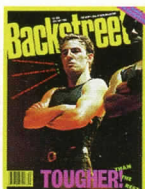
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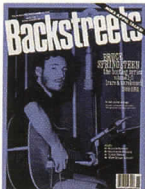
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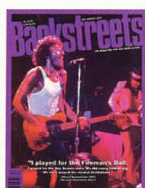
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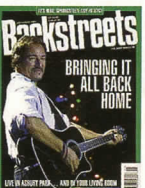
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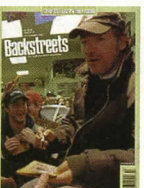
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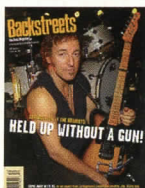
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SLIPS

COMPUTER COWBOY:

The *Essential Bruce Springsteen* entered the Billboard charts at #14—a fine debut, though the three-disc package dropped to number 76 by week three. If online file-sharing is the latest bugaboo to be killing the music industry, at least Bruce has thrown his hat in the official-download ring. “The Big Payback” was the first song from his catalog to be offered as a legit download, available for under a buck from Apple’s iTunes shop in advance of the *Essential* hard-copy release. Since then, numerous catalog tracks have been added, with a few highlighted by iTunes’ “Celebrity Playlists.” Among the recommendations from Sting was “The Ghost of Tom Joad,” of which he wrote: “I realized very quickly reading the lyrics that he’d upped the stakes. I think it’s the best record he’s done.” Counting Crows selected “Wild Billy’s Circus Story” for their playlist, with the band’s Dan Vickrey calling the song “a perfect short story from one of the guys who wrote the book on it.”

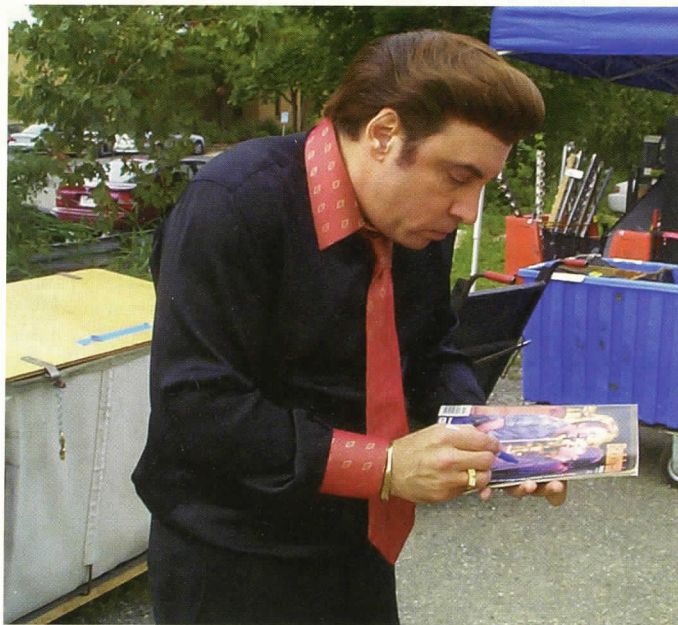
ROCK THE VOTE:

Ronald Reagan’s campaign may have blundered famously by namechecking Bruce a couple decades ago, but the Boss connection remains too good to resist for Presidential hopefuls. Howard Dean recently used “Land of Hope and Dreams” over the P.A. after a speech in Los Angeles. At a fundraiser for John Kerry, the Massachusetts Senator took matters into his own hands by joining Popgun Seven onstage to play “Tenth Avenue Freeze-out” on electric guitar. When asked for a favorite song at the September 9 Democratic Party debate (shortly after catching Springsteen at Fenway), Kerry chose “No Surrender.” Dick Gephardt also went with the Boss, picking “Born in the U.S.A.” As for Dean, he went with the obvious: Wyclef Jean’s “Jaspora.” . . . A well-turned Bruce reference cropped up in an Associated Press book review, as Steve Brisendine wrote: “There’s little in John Grisham’s latest departure from courtroom drama that Bruce Springsteen didn’t already say in the first verse of

“Glory Days” and the chorus of “My Hometown.” . . . Annie Leibovitz (who shot the covers for *Songs and Born in the U.S.A.*, among other famous Springsteen images), returns to her roots with a new book of photographs called *American Music*. Mostly taken in recent years, these portraits of American greats include a two-page spread of Springsteen from 1999, seated at a table, working on a setlist—and a bowl of soup. Mmm, mmm, good.

DOUBLE SHIFTS:

Silvio by day, Little Steven by night: Steve Van Zandt has been taping for the upcoming season of *The Sopranos*—and he actually worked both jobs when the *Rising* tour hit Shea in early October. Speaking of double duty, Steve was just one of several E Streeters with extra-curricular performances over the course of the summer tour. On July 29, he joined Ringo Starr at Radio City Music Hall for “A Little Help From My Friends.” The following week, All-Starr Band alum Nils Lofgren guested on the same song with Ringo, on August 3 at the PNC Bank Arts Center in Holmdel, NJ. Ringo thanked him “for being out here when his own band has the night off.” . . . In between the Philly and Chicago E Street dates, Nils sat in with Bob Dylan at the Hammerstein Ballroom in NYC, jamming with him for most of the night. . . . Back at the PNC, Max Weinberg joined The Doors of the 21st Century, drumming on “Light My Fire” on August 23. . . . First he was the Big Man, then the Emperor of E Street, and now: Johnny “Saxophone” Watson. Clarence took on the role (not much of a stretch, one could argue) as he returned to the small screen this fall (after previous television guest spots on *Diff’rent Strokes* and *Jake and the Fat Man*) in the November 26 episode of the ABC sitcom *My Wife and Kids*. . . . Clarence is also planning a follow-up to his *Live in Asbury Park* disc, due in early ‘04, with more live material recorded at the same Labor Day 2001 Stone Pony stand. *Live in Asbury Park, Vol. II* will include a guest turn from Bruce (who was not on the first volume) taking vocals and lead guitar on “Raise Your Hand.” . . . Patti Scialfa recorded a new version of her song “Love’s



Seven hours before the E Streeters take the stage for opening night at Shea, Silvio Dante signs his favorite magazine at the Bada Bing club (a.k.a. Satin Dolls). October 1, 2003, Lodi, NJ.

Glory,” originally on 1993’s *Rumble Doll*, for the October 24 episode of ABC’s *Joan of Arcadia*. This time around, she recorded it with her husband in their home studio, with Springsteen playing guitar. Patti’s long-awaited sophomore effort, as yet untitled, cropped up on a Sony schedule for early 2004—though her fans have learned not make any definite release party plans.

SING THIS SONG:

The PNC Arts Center was home not only to a few E Street guests this summer, but also to others paying their respects to a certain ten-night stand just up the road. On July 14, the night before the E Street Band’s summer tour began at Giants Stadium, Pearl Jam finished theirs at PNC. Eddie Vedder said, “You might be seeing this guy in the next few days,” as he performed a solo-acoustic “Growin’ Up” for the first time. “I heard that he was supposed to play this very venue,” Vedder told the crowd, “but apparently they didn’t have 167 open nights in a row.” Opening band Sleater-Kinney kicked in “The Promised Land” to boot. . . . As the Lollapalooza festival hit the PNC, Audioslave’s Chris Cornell offered a solo-acoustic “Atlantic City.” In response to the inevitable “Broooocing” from the crowd, he noted, “Now there’s something I’ve never been called before.” . . . And when Counting

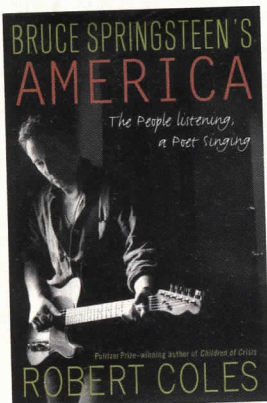
Crows played there, it was an acoustic “Thunder Road” that opened their concert, with singer Adam Duritz saying that he had just been listening to a *Tom Joad* boot before the show. . . . Over in NYC, Moby broke out his cover of “I’m on Fire” on *The Late Show with David Letterman*. . . . At Garland Jeffreys’ birthday bash at the Village Underground in July, he passed out a single he recorded of Springsteen’s “Streets of Philadelphia.” . . . Superchunk has been known to cover “Born to Run” when in Jersey; frontman Mac McCaughan’s side project, Portastatic, includes two great Bruce covers on the *Autumn Was a Lark* EP: “Growin’ Up,” and an acoustic radio performance of “Bobby Jean.” . . . The Johnny Cash edition of the *Artist’s Choice* compilations from Hear Music (and available at Starbucks), is a mix of favorites put together by the late, great Man in Black, featuring Springsteen’s “Highway Patrolman.” In his liner notes, Cash also mentioned a cover we hope we’ll eventually get to hear: “Well, the newest thing that I’ve done, I just recorded a Bruce Springsteen song called ‘Further On (Up The Road).’ It’s from his *The Rising* album. I always have been a Springsteen fan, and my favorite album of his is *Nebraska*, and my favorite song of his is ‘Highway Patrolman.’” Impeccable taste to the end. Rest in Peace, Johnny. ➔

Bruce Springsteen's America

Talking Back to the Boss

By Roderick Jones

The narrators of *Bruce Springsteen's America: The People Listening, a Poet Singing* don't have the usual qualifications to be talking for pages and pages about the Boss and his music the way they do. They haven't been to a concert, kept track of Bruce's taste in women, clothes, or facial hair, or even associated a song with their first kiss or some other memorable event in their lives. They initially came across his music by chance—overhearing a child or spouse playing an album, usually—but their relationships with Bruce are intense:



they know his characters well and have strong feelings about what happens to them. They hear Springsteen's words coming out of their mouths. They have Boss on the brain.

The heart of *Springsteen's America* consists of transcripts of interviews of ten people with whom author Robert Coles became acquainted over the years through his wide-ranging documentary projects. Coles' financially troubled magazine, *DoubleTake*, was the beneficiary of Springsteen's Somerville concerts in February 2003, but Coles doesn't describe his personal relationship with Springsteen in depth. Instead, we get to know a hand-

ful of average Americans—a couple of teachers, a trucker, a corporate consultant, and so on—by listening to them talk about their families, their jobs, and their own personal “darknesses” and “promised lands.”

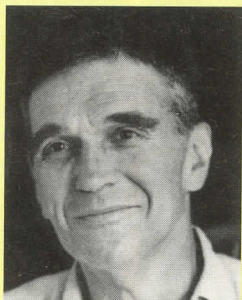
Coles quotes the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson as having said, “We hear a person speaking, and often later, away from the person, we speak back, continue the conversation.” The monologues in the book amount to a series of such continued conversations that a Springsteen song initiated for a given narrator. A suitable subtitle for the book could have been “A Poet Singing, the People Arguing.” These people are fired up, whether pro or con.

Some of the criticisms are variations on old themes. The corporate consultant questions the validity of Springsteen's portrayal of the returning soldier in “Born in the U.S.A.” (“My brother went

and fought in Vietnam, and damn if he would ever talk like that, about ‘the yellow man’”). The homemaker daydreams about stopping Bruce on the street and challenging him to apply the same empathy and skill he used to write songs from a migrant worker's perspective to come up with a few from a woman's point of view. Other takes, though, are more thought-provoking and give a glimpse of the narrator's essence as much as that of the song.

A police officer from a small Rhode Island town responds to “Johnny 99.” He takes the focus off of Johnny (a “guy who's looking to get caught”) and puts it on the night clerk and his family. This real-life cop says, “Maybe I've been in too many courtrooms,” but he objects to the way the song generates a wave of sympathy for the “low-life murderer” while erasing the clerk's

THE DOC & THE BOSS



WHEREVER THERE'S somebody fighting for a place to stand, a decent job or a helping hand, Dr. Robert Coles has been there. In thousands of books and articles published since the 1960s on everything from migrant farm work

to school desegregation to teen parenthood, Coles, 73, has created a comprehensive literary encyclopedia of the American experience. In *Bruce Springsteen's America*, Coles describes Springsteen as one of his “traveling companions” in these endeavors. Coles attributes the theme of traveling companions to William Carlos Williams, who wrote, “You never do know when and where the new traveling companion will show up for you . . . The singer [who becomes] your pal, your guide—even for a few minutes, your inspiring teacher who [gets] you thinking like never before.”

The teaching and inspiration seems to be a two-way street for these two pals. The Boss has acknowledged the impact Coles' 1999 work, *The Secular Mind*, had on him. Springsteen also reportedly participated in one of Coles' classes

at Harvard, where Coles is the James Agee Professor of Social Ethics and teaches courses at the undergraduate college, medical school, business school, and law school.

Although the friendship first attracted publicity around the time of Springsteen's concert to benefit *DoubleTake*, the documentary magazine edited by Coles, the relationship goes back a few years. By the late 1980s, Coles' sons had turned him on to the Boss, and one of Coles' other traveling companions, novelist Walker Percy, had voiced his enthusiasm for Springsteen's work. Percy was such an admirer that he wrote Bruce a fan letter. The letter eventually led to the publication in *DoubleTake* of an interview of Springsteen by Percy's nephew in 1998. In the interview, Springsteen cites Percy, William Carlos Williams, and Flannery O'Connor as important influences.

Not coincidentally, Coles has written full-length books about each of these authors that Springsteen mentioned. Many of Coles' other books, including those in the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Children of Crisis* series, have a construction that's similar to *Bruce Springsteen's America*—a series of descriptions or transcriptions of interviews with regular people accompanied by Coles' discussion of the narrative themes.

Coles is a child psychiatrist by training, but Springsteen's nickname for him, “The Doc”, could just as easily refer to his work as a documentarian. Documentary work—as an academic discipline—integrates art with anthropology as a way

of educating the public about different walks of life, often with an undercurrent of social justice advocacy. One of its tenets is that people can learn more about a society and its morals from certain novels, photographs, or oral histories—or Springsteen songs!—than from a sociology textbook on the same subject. It was to further this idea and support fellow documentarians that Coles helped found *DoubleTake*, as well as Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies.

While Coles has won some of the nation's most prestigious awards (including the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the MacArthur—a.k.a. “Genius”—Fellowship), he projects more absent-minded professor than jet-setting academic superstar. (And this, no doubt, has helped his subjects feel comfortable enough to share their hopes and dreams with him.) Coles' soft-spoken demeanor was on display at Springsteen's concert to raise funds for *DoubleTake*. His faltering introduction to open the show prompted the Boss to joke, “Bob Coles will not be rivaling Clarence as an emcee for the next tour.”

Even if he doesn't take the stage next time around (tambourine, anyone?), Coles is likely to continue in his role as what Bruce calls, “an expert question-asker.” In *Bruce Springsteen's America*, the people listen to the poet singing. And as has been true for nearly the past half-century, when the people speak, the Doc is listening.

—Roderick Jones

life right after it is so briefly mentioned.

What about the rest of us who have "thoughts in our heads" that we don't know what to do with, other than try with every ounce of strength to keep under wraps (you bet, under wraps!). Are we supposed to start sobbing, I want to know, because a guy has lost his job—and decides to go on a killing spree after he's tanked himself up with that Tanqueray stuff!

These arguments with the Boss, though, aren't angry; even as they criticize, Coles' interviewees revere Springsteen's songs. The same cop who unloads on "Johnny 99" (and later, "American Skin") also describes having such a vivid image in his mind of "Used Cars" that he can even see the flavor of the ice cream cone (chocolate) the girl in the front seat is licking. And he has to chuckle in telling how lines from "Open All Night" overtook him as he was about to issue a speed-ticket.

I was after him fast, and got up to him in no time. Down goes the window, and the guy's fumbling around for his wallet as I start my routine. That was when the Boss got into my head—I was a little surprised to hear myself say what I did, the first time in that kind of situation: "You sure are coverin' a lot of ground."

Coles opens the book with two chapters of his own musings. He pays homage to Springsteen by illustrating what the Boss has in common with Coles' mentor and hero, the late physician and writer from Paterson, New Jersey, William Carlos Williams. (There is even a poem about "the Doc and the Boss" that is dedicated to Williams.) The Coles chapters require a high level of cultural literacy, with Springsteen's qualities being associated with those of Williams, writer Walker Percy, painter Edward Hopper, jazz musician Horace Tapscott, photographer George Tice, and others. Readers who aren't familiar with these folks or discouraged by the name-dropping may feel like challenging themselves to find out more about these artists Coles admires and make their own judgments about the commonalities.

While Coles' chapters are thematic, the other self-portraits are loose and meandering—at times to the point of being distracting. One narrator admits, "I'm in grave danger of becoming a successful windbag," and another says, "I fear I'm rambling here." (Affirmative on both observations.) The reader might wish that Coles had edited some chapters more tightly. But the author seems intent on capturing the banal as well as the deep. How good, after all, is the average Joe at being profound and succinct when he's trying to explain what a piece of art means to him? Springsteen himself has been known to do some rambling when it comes to this.

At the Somerville performances, Springsteen dedicated "The Promised Land" to Coles. It was a stark arrangement, devoid of the soaring harmonica solos and driving rhythm—more spoken word than rock 'n' roll. One of the narrators of *Springsteen's America*, despite probably having never heard this spare version of the song, offered this:

I'll hear him singing "The Promised Land" and I'll think of the work I've got to do tomorrow and the next day and the next one after that; I'll think of what it all means, that work, and I'll think of my family, Laura and the kids, and I'll decide that it's here, every day: that promised land place of territory. So, you keep heading on, heading there, you hope, step by step, day by day, and if a song helps you with your moving, your steering, so much for the better, sometimes.

Springsteen's America is the story of people whose Boss is devoid of celebrity and stage-long knee slides. Coles' men and women steer through life with a plainer version of Bruce in their minds. At its best, *Springsteen's America*—like the Somerville performance of "The Promised Land"—reminds us of the power of Springsteen's words. 🐾

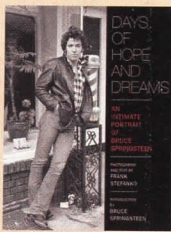
Roderick Jones is a communicable disease epidemiologist with the Chicago Department of Public Health. His first public health experience came in 1991 through a Center for Documentary Studies-sponsored internship at a health center for migrant farm workers in rural North Carolina.

FURTHER READING: More New Bruce Books

ON SHELVES NOW

• *Days of Hope and Dreams: An Intimate Portrait of Bruce Springsteen*

By Frank Stefanko
(Softcover, 136 pages - Watson-Guptill)

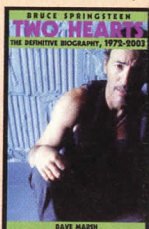


Stefanko, the photographer who shot the *Darkness and River* album covers—along with thousands of other soul-penetrating images of Bruce in the late

'70s and early '80s—finally opens up his archives. (See *Backstreets* #77 for more on Stefanko.) In addition to the striking photography, *Days of Hope and Dreams* includes Stefanko's extensive annotations and a foreword from Springsteen himself. A limited edition is planned: a hardbound volume signed by Stefanko and accompanied by an actual print of a photograph that does not appear in the book.

• *Bruce Springsteen: Two Hearts, The Definitive Biography, 1972-2003*

By Dave Marsh
(Softcover, 688 pages - Routledge)

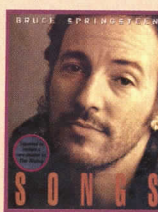


Not a full new book from Marsh, but *Two Hearts* does fans the service of getting his pair of Springsteen biographies back in print. *Born to Run* and *Glory Days*, which covered Bruce's

career in the '70s and '80s, respectively, are collected here in one massive volume, including all material from previous editions. Marsh adds an extra intro and a new chapter to bring Bruce's story up to date through *The Rising*.

• *Songs* By Bruce Springsteen

(Softcover, 352 pages - HarperEntertainment)



Five years after Springsteen gave his lyrics the coffee-table treatment, *Songs* has its first softcover edition. It's been slightly expanded, with new photos and lyrics from his work after 1998. Bruce brings things up to date with the addition of lyrics for *Live in New York City* (well, "American Skin" (41 Shots) and "Land of Hope and Dreams," at least) and *The Rising*, along with his insights into each, providing chapter introductions as he did with his previous albums in the first edition. Not included are the songs from *Tracks* or 18 *Tracks*—or disc three of *Essential*, for that matter.

COMING SOON

• *Racing in the Street: The Bruce Springsteen Reader*

Edited by June Skinner Sawyers,
foreword by Martin Scorsese
(400 pages - Penguin)



The first comprehensive collection of writings about Springsteen, starting with the first major piece on the Boss, Peter Knobler's 1973 *Crawdaddy* article, "Who is Bruce

Springsteen and Why Are We Saying All These Wonderful Things About Him?" through the present day. *Racing in the Street* will include the dueling *Time* and *Newsweek* cover stories from 1975, George Will's "Bruuuuuce" column that famously misinterpreted Bruce's message, and interviews from *The Advocate*, *DoubleTake*, and the *New York Times*. What you won't find (not for lack of trying on Sawyers' part): Jon Landau's May 22, 1974 "Growing Young with Rock and Roll" piece from the *Real Paper*, in which Springsteen's manager-to-be saw "rock and roll future." But the rest of the big guns are here, with writings on Springsteen from Marsh, Lester Bangs, Greil Marcus, Bobbie Ann Mason, Robert Hilburn, Peter Guralnick, Elizabeth Wurtzel, Dave Barry, Mikal Gilmore, and more, including *Backstreets* writers Christopher Phillips, Charles R. Cross, and Robert Santelli. With introductions by Sawyers and bonus material including a discography. (Due 2/24/04)

ON THE HORIZON

Coming in 2004 from BloomsburyUSA is an anthology of short crime fiction by noted mystery/suspense writers, all based on "Meeting Across the River." Yep, you read that right. Co-editor Jessica Kaye, who came up with the concept, says she found the song "particularly cinematic and intriguing, because it tells a story, but there is so much more of the story that is untold [and] left to one's imagination." She says she has been granted permission to reprint the lyrics in the anthology, tentatively titled *Meeting Across the River*. . . . In the U.K., Bloomsbury has bought the rights to a memoir titled *Greetings From Bury Park*, by British writer Sarfraz Manzoor. According to the publisher, the book "will examine how Sarfraz, a second generation immigrant from Pakistan to the UK in the 1970s, escaped the humdrum tedium of life in the English suburbs and the restrictions of his culture by discovering and becoming obsessed by Bruce Springsteen—the man, his music and his message."



Lopez Retropsychedelicalizes Steel Mill

Mad Dogs & Jerseymen

By Bob Makin

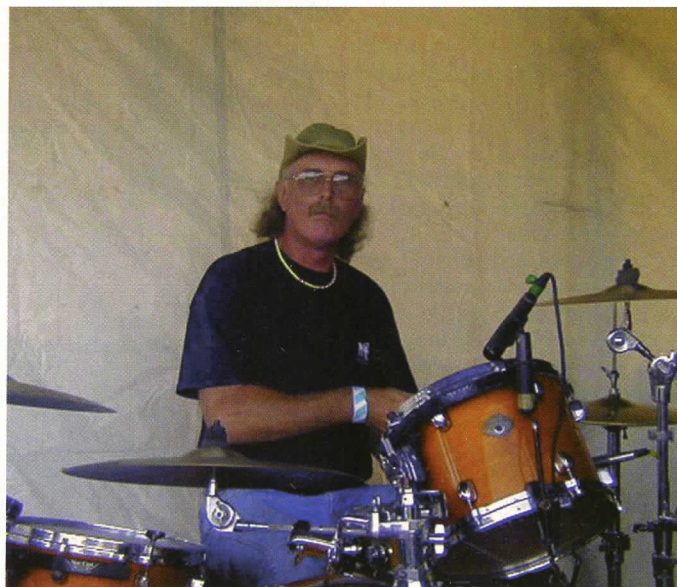
It could be said that former E Street Band drummer Vini "Mad Dog" Lopez kick-started the original New Jersey music scene by inviting Bruce Springsteen down to the Upstage in Asbury Park to jam with him and Danny Federici in the late '60s. Danny and Vini played with Bruce in the band Child, and then in 1969—along with Robbin Thompson and Steve Van Zandt—they formed Steel Mill. The rest, as they say, is history—but not strictly in the past.

On July 21 at Giants Stadium, Lopez got Springsteen's blessing to pursue Steel Mill Retro, a group that combines original tunes by Springsteen's first great band with early E Street Band material and stuff that Lopez has written and performed throughout his music career at the Jersey Shore. At that stadium show, "Mad Dog" got more than he bargained for: he got to play "Spirit in the Night" in front of more than 50,000 Boss fanatics.

The following chat with Vincenzo, as I've affectionately called him for some 15 years, reveals that Steel Mill Retro records first, performs later. Lopez also talked about a book he's writing that traces his days playing music on E Street in Belmar to several years before the formation of the same-named band.

How did Steel Mill Retro come together?

I got out of music when I became caddy master at Deal Country & Golf Club. I played on and off with the B Street Band—I'd jam with them, but the job took up too much of my time. I jammed with Bocci-galupe's band with John Luraschi at B.B. King's. I said to the guys, "Do you wanna learn some Steel Mill songs?" I always did stuff like "Going Back to Georgia." And they said, "Sure." That's how it got started. We learned and rehearsed a couple of songs and



Mad Dog jams with the B Street Band, Labor Day weekend 2003.

played them at B.B. King's, that was our first gig. It was really like a jam session. We rehearsed once and knew the stuff.

The band is changing now. When we're recording, we use [guitarist] Ricky DeSarno [Cold, Blast & Steel, Lord Gunner] and [bassist] John Luraschi [Cold, Blast & Steel]. We're looking for keyboards and waiting for some feedback on that.

What was it like approaching Bruce about using the name and the songs?

Years ago, Bruce told me it was okay to do Steel Mill. Many years ago. I wanted to have a Steel Mill reunion. Bruce said no: "Never go backward." So I said, "Do you mind if I do it?" He said, "Go ahead, they're all yours." I wanted to make sure it was still okay before doing stuff. So I went to Giants Stadium on July 21. I was there to ask about that, and I hadn't seen a show in a while. He said, "I told you, it's yours to do what you want with."

What songs are you doing?

We're going to record all of them. Right now, we have eight songs, like "The Wind and the Rain," "The Judge Song" [a.k.a.

"He's Guilty"], "American Song," "Janey, I Wanna Thank You," "Come On," "KT88," which is an instrumental.

What about "Garden State Parkway Blues?"

"Garden State Parkway Blues" is a little more involved, but we're going to do all those songs. There's so many of them. We'll go through them. We're also going to do some of my stuff and stuff from the albums I was on, like "Rosalita," "Spirit in the Night," and "Lost in the Flood." That's a great song. I've always wanted to do that.

What do you think has made him give the blessing for this project?

He's never going to do that stuff again. We're old buds. I'm the only one that could do it properly. Bruce don't mind me tryin'. It's no big deal. I want to do it because nobody heard it—just the people who were there.

What's your most fond memory of Steel Mill?

Every time we played "The Wind and the Rain," that's what would happen. We were in this little place that had like 380 peo-

ple, and this ball of lightning came right in the window. We had just started playing "The Wind and the Rain." We were playing with David Peel & the Lower East Side, and we were playing on the East Freak Beach in Long Branch, and there was a thunder storm so we had to stop playing.

For an original unsigned band in the late '60s and early '70s—a time when everyone was doing covers—Steel Mill was huge. The band met with great success for its time.

Bill Graham wanted to sign us, but he wasn't going to give us anything. We were riding out to California. Bruce was with Tinker [West, Springsteen's early manager] and the rest of us were in the other car. We had talked to Johnny Winter, who was offered \$300,000 to sign with someone—Graham wanted to give us \$1,000. Tinker nixed it. It was ridiculous. I'm glad it didn't work out, because it was better for Bruce in the long run. Whether I'm glad or not, it's history.

That was in January 1970. The band continued into 1971. We worked with fraternities a ton, played in the gyms at Monmouth College. We'd charge two dollars at the door. We became very popular, like a cult.

(child)
feb. 27-28
the center 9pm
\$2.50
squeeze light brigade

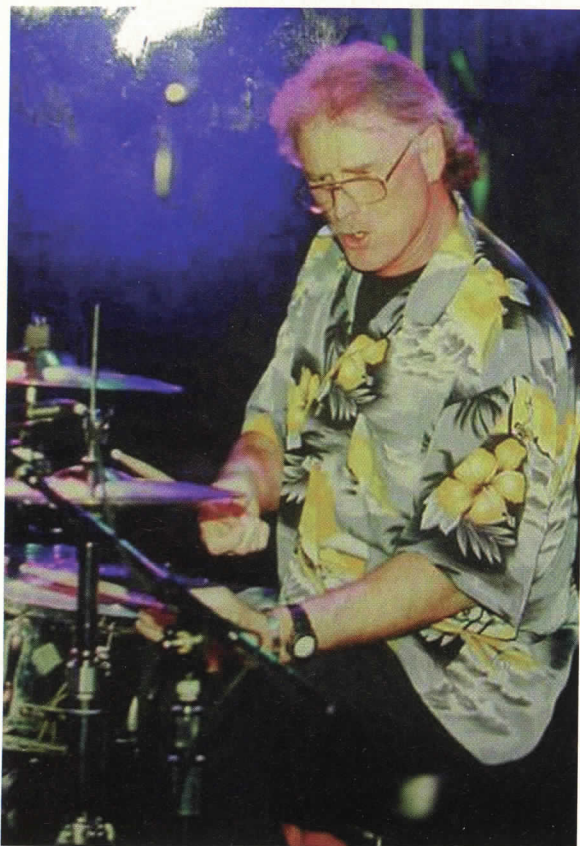
It's still like a cult with all the bootlegs. So I figured people would like to hear a real band. We try to make it authentic.

So is Steel Mill going to play live or are you just recording for now?

We're concentrating on just recording. But we've learned enough tunes to play a night. We don't want to play with other bands—just us. We'll do old Disco Rejects stuff, Steel Mill, Brucie. And we'll get into more modern music, but I don't know what. But first we'll record, and then we'll see what happens.

You performed "Spirit in the Night" with Bruce that night at Giants Stadium. Can you share any recollections about how that performance came together? What was it like?

I always like talking to Bruce. My wife Laurel and I went backstage. Terry Magovern was back there, and he said, "Don't go too far. Bruce wants to talk to you." I talked to Danny, and Steven was running around and I said hello. Bruce came out of the room and he said, "Hey, Vini, you and Laurel come in the room. We hugged and said "how are you doin'" and all that. I said, "I know you're busy, but I just wanted to make sure you wouldn't mind if I did the Steel Mill songs." We went back and forth about who's in the band and what songs we're doing. Then he said, "I've got one question for you. Will you play with me tonight?" I said, "Sure, which one?" I figured "Rosie," but he said "Spirit in the Night." "Can you still play 'Spirit in the Night'?" And I said, "Sure, do you still do that break in the middle?" Because when I play it with the B Street Band, they do that break. He said, "No, we just play it like on the record." I said, "That's cool with me." He said, "Do you want to listen to it? Terry can play it for you." He thinks I [don't remember it], but I



do play it in the B Street Band.

So it was good. But when I went to go backstage for the song, a guard said my pass was no good and wouldn't let me get to the stage. But Terry got me back in the backstage area, handed me some sticks, plugged in some headphones, and the next thing I know, I'm playing. It was really cool. They made me feel really comfortable, all those E Streeters.

Are you doing any other bands or music-related projects besides Steel Mill? Are the Disco Rejects still around, or are most of them playing with Boccigalupe & the Bad Boys?

Sometimes I still sit in or actually do a gig with the B Street Band. We do all the old stuff—and "Margaritaville." I'm playing the whole night with them in December for two or three gigs. It's fun. Me, Ricky, and Johnny did a Disco Rejects show at Harry's [Roadhouse] for all the people who couldn't get into the Pony for the Light of Day show. We did it as a three-piece.

You're writing a book about the Asbury Park music scene. Where are you at with that

project? And what is it like—your memoir, a scene history, or both?

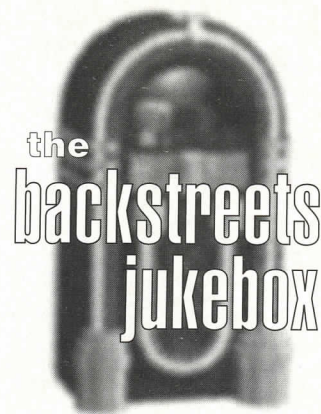
It's called *The First Beat from E Street*. The first time I played there was with the band Sonny & the Starfires at Chuck Dillon's house on 13th Street. There was this Methodist church on E Street and 13th. We were practicing, and this pastor asked us to play for some kids, so we packed up and moved everything and played on 13th and E. There are lots of little stories like that in the book, and it goes in some kind of chronological order. But I start the book at the golf course. People were always asking me questions at the

golf course: How did I get started in music? We'd talk about what we used to do at teen dances.... Publishers always want dirt: how many hotel rooms did we trash, how many girls did we bang. I just remember always being in the car. We wrecked that poor car. But there's stuff about Sonny Kenn, and how I met Bruce.

And how did you meet Bruce?

Federici and I were looking for guitar players. The Downtown Tangiers Rock and Rhythm & Blues Band had broken up with Bill Chinnock. I saw Bruce, me and my friend Chuck Dillon, so I invited Bruce to the Upstage. I jammed with him. And we jammed with Little Vini Roslin. The four of us jammed, and Bruce and I went downstairs to talk a bit. We both wanted to do original stuff. Bruce said, "I know a guy who can help us—Tinker." So we went to see Tinker, and he took us under his wing. 🐼

Bob Makin is a New Jersey-based music writer who's covered the scene there for 23 years. His work has been published in Downbeat, Details, Relix, The Aquarian Weekly, and The Asbury Park Press.



1. Bruce Springsteen
Essential
Columbia (3CD)

2. Warren Zevon
The Wind
Artemis (CD)

3. Ryan Adams
Rock N Roll
Lost Highway (CD)

4. The Darkness
Permission to Land
Atlantic (CD)

5. Sun Kil Moon
Ghosts of the Great Highway
Jet Set (CD)

6. The Twilight Singers
Blackberry Belle
One Little Indian (CD)

7. TV on the Radio
Young Liars
Touch and Go (CD)

8. Portastatic
The Summer of the Shark
Merge (CD)

9. Various Artists
Kill Bill: Volume One
Maverick (CD)

10. Shane Fontayne
What Nature Intended
Mile End (CD)

10
Monster
Discs to Play Today
and Everyday



With this year's Light of Day proceedings extended to two days (for the first time in the event's four years), the opportunity to catch a variety of established and up-and-coming artists made tickets to the 2003 shows highly desirable not just for Springsteen fans, but for music lovers of all stripes. The release of a two-CD set of Springsteen covers, also called *Light of Day*, gave organizer Bob Benjamin a large, diverse pool of talent from which to draw. The result was a strong lineup for his fourth annual benefit, featuring tried-and-true Stone Pony stalwarts John Eddie and Gary U.S. Bonds, local favorites Melissa Chill and Bruce Tunkel, New Yorkers Jesse Malin and Willie Nile, Jersey soulsters Boccigalupe & the Bad Boys and Jobonnano, and FOBs (Friends of Bruce) Garland Jeffreys and Joe Grushecky. Jeffreys and Grushecky rounded out night one with a pair of the jams with Springsteen that have become a hallmark of the Light of Day shows.

This year's setup included an outdoor acoustic stage, which allowed much-needed respite from the heat, smoke, and noise inside and provided some of the weekend's most intriguing entertainment. The masses who planted themselves inside awaiting a Springsteen appearance missed out on a number of strong acoustic sets. Several of these were punctuated by the delightful presence of Monmouth County's own Melissa Chill, who lent her mellifluous soprano to sets by Rob Dye, Charlie McIntosh and Bobby Strange. It had to be a Stone Pony first—a singalong on night one of the old-time country classic "Will the Circle Be Unbroken," dedicated by McIntosh and Company to Johnny and June Carter Cash.

Unfortunately, for many, that was a moment lost to the Bruce Watch. Inside, conditions on both nights were difficult at best, with a capacity-plus crowd making it virtually impossible to move. Several patrons passed out due to the excessive heat over the course of the weekend, and it seemed many were too exhausted by the long days to respond with more than tepid

JUST AROUND THE CORNER

The Fourth Annual Light of Day Concerts to Benefit Parkinson's

Springsteen plays for the fourth year of four. And believe it or not, there were other artists there too! **Lisa Iannucci** reports.

applause for even the most engaging performers. More than a few had never been to the Stone Pony before, and it seemed that a significant number were just biding their time waiting for a big (Springsteen) finish, a circumstance sadly not lost on the participants.

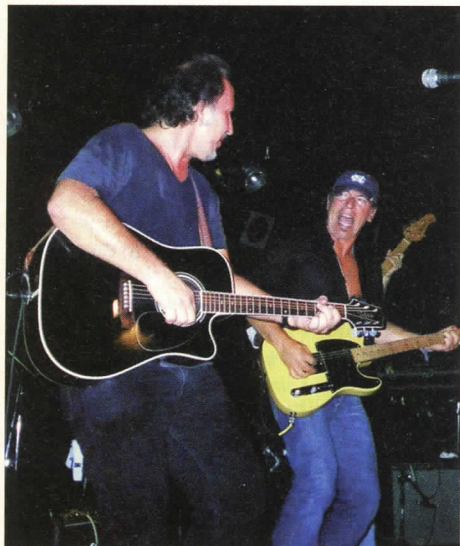
Too bad, because apart from the extended Boss jam closing out night one, there was some pretty great music going on. Though the usual suspects (Bobby Bandiera, La Bamba) were absent due to prior commitments, those in need of some Jersey-style soul got solid performances from Boccigalupe and Jobonnano, the former turning in some stellar covers of

The Stone Pony • Asbury Park, NJ • November 1-2, 2003

Steve Van Zandt's "Forever" and "Until the Good is Gone," and the latter rocking the house with an entertaining set of original material. If it was passion and drama you needed, there were Mariah and Jesse Malin. Both of these acts, who have Springsteen connections but are underappreciated on the Jersey Shore, won themselves new fans with brief but intense sets on night two, reflecting their reverence for such heroes the Ramones, the Replacements, and, of course, some guy named Bruce. If you wanted intelligent acoustic music you got Dan Bern and Willie Nile (the latter fresh from guest spots at Springsteen's Shea Stadium swan song)—their performances on night two were full of humor and grit. Also on night two, the always entertaining Gary U.S. Bonds performed his usual mix of '60s classics ("New Orleans") and E Street gems ("Rendezvous").

Speaking of E Street, Soozie Tyrell's brief set on Night One was one of the high points of the weekend. Leading off that portion of the program was Soozie's friend Jennifer Glass, who impressed with her dynamic stage presence and powerful voice. Tyrell herself was absorbing, the sheer joy of performing evident in her broad smile. Her set-closing "Silver Lining" was truly transcendent, and her performance was disappointingly brief; Tyrell returned to the Pony in late November for a full show.

The "heart of the order" arrived onstage close to midnight on night one, with one of the longer sets of the event from Garland Jeffreys and his band the Coney Island Playboys. Always an eclectic performer, Garland drew heavily on his *Don't Call Me Buckwheat*



MIKE BRAZINSKI PHOTO



Above: Joe Grushecky, organizer Bob Benjamin, Michael J. Fox, and Springsteen celebrate their family ties.

album during a performance that emphasized the political over the personal side of his long career with such tunes as "I May Not Be Your Kind." Finally, during "Hail Hail Rock'n' Roll," Jeffreys called Bruce Springsteen, who had been watching the proceedings from near the DJ booth, up to the stage.

Bruce's appearance at all three previous Light of Day events had virtually guaranteed a fourth consecutive showing in many people's minds, and he did not disappoint, closing Garland's set with him on a rousing "96 Tears." But despite a solid effort on Garland's part, his set failed to engage an audience that, regardless of the appearance of their "local hero," seemed too tired to respond with more than polite applause. Bruce left the stage with Jeffreys but, given that jams with headliner Joe Grushecky having been central to the event in years past, everyone stayed put for the Pittsburgh native's upcoming set.

Grushecky followed with a brief set backed by the Houserockers—son Johnny sat in for a couple numbers—and was even able to squeeze in several new songs before the inevitable Bruce jam. And what a jam it was—a mixture of Springsteen tunes (some co-written with Grushecky) and covers that was tightly focused and well rehearsed. From "Code of Silence" to "From Small Things," Bruce and Joe delivered solid performances, trading lead vocals on some songs, singing solo on others. Sporting a UNC baseball hat (which he later tipped to the audience and then flipped backward), a seriously unbuttoned black fitted shirt, loose blue jeans and broad grin, Bruce took charge

BRUCE ROCKS LOD4

11/1/03

With Garland Jeffreys
Hail Hail Rock and Roll
96 Tears

With Joe Grushecky and the Houserockers
Never Be Enough Time
Homestead
From Small Things
Code of Silence
Fire
Talking to the King
Johnny 99
Murder Inc.*
Pumping Iron
Happy Birthday
Light of Day*
Dirty Water*
Twist and Shout*

**additional performers included Michael J. Fox, Willie Nile, Johnny Grushecky, Bob Benjamin, Garland Jeffries, Boccigalupe, Jobonanno, and others from night one's earlier sets.*



RUTH BARON PHOTO

with a joy and intensity that were a pleasure to watch.

Highlights included a reworked, rockabilly-flavored "Johnny 99" and a rousing "Murder Incorporated" that finally elicited the type of audience response expected at such an event. Even Johnny Grushecky had a brief chance to shine on guitar, causing a delighted Bruce to shout, "I have seen rock 'n' roll future!" after introducing Joe's son as part of the line-up. Also drawing a vociferous response was the ever-popular "Fire," which Bruce milked for maximum female response, complete with raised eyebrows and lascivious grin.

Lest anyone forget, the event was a charity fundraiser for the Parkinson's Disease Foundation; organizer Bob Benjamin was called to the stage in short order to make a few remarks and to accept birthday greetings and a cake. The soft-spoken Benjamin was clearly touched when everyone gathered to sing "Happy Birthday" and to thank him for organizing the weekend's concerts. Just when things seemed to be at their peak, however, in walked Michael J. Fox, who had been flown in from New York City by helicopter to take part in the event. Strapping on a guitar, he joined in a loose, set-closing "Light of Day," the song for which the event was named. (Fox has Parkinson's and



JOHN CAVANAUGH PHOTO

starred in the film for which Bruce wrote the song). After a brief pause to catch their breath, everyone returned to the stage (which by now was getting rather crowded), and the evening came to a rollicking conclusion on an extended

version of "Twist and Shout." As in days of old, Bruce had everyone dancing and singing along house-party style, and at last the place seemed to let loose. The jam portion of the evening lasted over an hour, but it was so transfixing, it seemed like only a couple of minutes had gone by. Definitely a jam for the ages, and certainly the perfect way to end night one.

Night two was largely a solid night of entertainment, especially on the mainstage—the aforementioned Willie Nile, Dan Bern, Jesse Malin and Marah sets being only a few of the many highlights. Even Joe and Johnny Grushecky reappeared on the second night, though not for a full set; they sat in with Nile and Danny White early in the proceedings. Many who attended both nights preferred Sunday's line-up to Saturday's. Something got a

A Shea Stadium reunion: Garland Jeffreys, Willie Nile, and Springsteen on LOD night one.

little lost along the way, though, and there were problems on night two aside from the absence of another Springsteen performance.

Exit 105 both opened and closed out the second night's show (Springsteen was seen in the DJ booth early in the day with his daughter Jessica, said to be a fan—they left and did not return). Following Bonds' highly anticipated set late in the evening, John Eddie took the stage, performing admirably before the Pony faithful despite horrible sound system problems that had everyone holding their ears. Eddie left the stage smiling and shrugging—what can you do when everyone expects Bruce? A jam featuring Boccigalupe and others followed, including a ragged version of the Jukes classic "I Don't Wanna Go Home"—and night two ended with both a whimper and a bang, as Exit 105 closed out the weekend still fighting the defective sound system.

All told, it was a weekend that yielded both expected and unexpected pleasures—one that left fans much to anticipate from some very promising "new" artists, and much to remember from some of their established favorites. However, it was an event that perhaps would have been better served by a larger venue. Despite the cachet of the Stone Pony, the drawing power of a highly likely Springsteen jam is such that it no longer seems feasible to hold such events in a club setting. What was once fun—a gamble that occasionally paid off in spades—seemed more like work at this year's Light of Day event. Hot, crowded conditions, Bruce watchers who weren't giving an inch—heaven help you if you merely wanted to enjoy the exceptional lineup—all lent a somewhat stressful atmosphere to what should have been a fun weekend in celebration of a good cause. Perhaps next year they'll get that part right. 🐾

Visit www.pdf.org to contribute to or learn more about the Parkinson's Disease Foundation.



RUTH BAROHN PHOTO

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
& THE E STREET BAND
summer tour 2003

ONCE MORE AROUND!

THE RISING TOUR PART IV JULY - OCTOBER 2003



FERRIS WHEEL: MARGARET MISH PHOTO; BRUCE: MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

OUTSIDE GIANTS STADIUM, as Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band returned to the U.S. for the last leg of their 16-month *Rising* journey, the seaside boardwalk had come to landlocked East Rutherford, New Jersey. Amidst the rides, the games of skill and chance, and the fried dough, the wares hawked at souvenir stands fit right in: T-shirts were emblazoned with new tour iconography of roller coasters and Ferris wheels, with most references to *The Rising* dropped in favor of a new label for the proceedings: "Summer Tour 2003." If you thought that meant the tour had been retooled for its homecoming, though, you were an easy mark. Twists and turns weren't exactly of Wild Mouse proportions as the final stretch began: "Summer Tour" or not, this was still a *Rising* show, through and through. On opening night, under open skies on a beautiful, where-would-you-rather-be Jersey evening, only "Sherry Darling" seemed a nod to the season. But moving

toward the fall, surprises like the apropos "Tunnel of Love" and "County Fair" gave setlist-watchers the kind of whiplash you'd get at Coney Island.

The summer 2003 shows also merged the Boss Fan's Favorite Pastime with America's, as the E Street Nine played at ballparks across the country for the first time. The size and mythology intrinsic to such venues added to the already grand nature of a stadium tour: gestures became even more larger-than-life, the choreography more fixed. On one hand, a ballpark is an even worse place to see a concert than a stadium when it comes to decent vantage points. For anyone in the stands behind the diamond, the strange void created by an off-limits infield made the distance to the stage feel even greater. But Bruce's penchant for historical venues ultimately paid off, and the atmosphere created by California's Pac Bell Park and Dodger Stadium or Boston's Fenway Park more than outweighed the negatives. These shows left critics

scrambling, if not for new superlatives, then for fresh baseball metaphors. But no one, as far as we could tell, used "strike-out" or even "a swing and a miss."

Robert Bader covers the opening and closing stands for us, and we couldn't think of a better choice. With these ten nights at Giants Stadium, Bader keeps his distinction of having seen every single show that Springsteen has played at the Meadowlands (see *Backstreets* #64 for his "Somewhere in the Swamps of Jersey" article, covering Springsteen's history at both the stadium and the arena prior to the *Rising* tour).

All told, it was quite a swing from the static shows that began the outing in 2002 to a closing stand that added another dozen songs to the tour's repertoire. And as the ride came to a halt at Shea Stadium, we just had one question: Can we go again?

—Christopher Phillips



FRANK DISTASI PHOTO

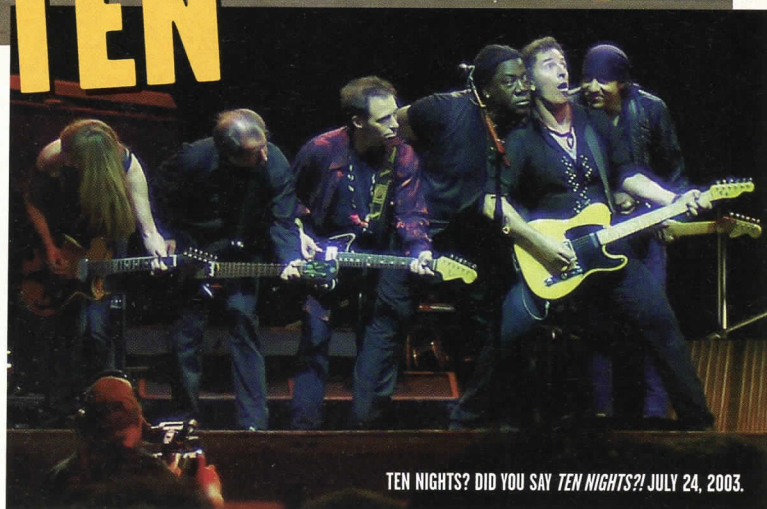
GIANTS STADIUM: FIRST AND TEN

WHEN BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN KICKED off the summer 2003 portion of the *Rising* tour at Giants Stadium with a solo acoustic "Born in the U.S.A.," it was as if he was trying to prove that a concert in a cavernous football stadium could somehow be an intimate event. Perhaps it was intimate for the people close enough to actually see Bruce without the benefit of the large video screens on either side of the enormous stage. But for the less fortunate folks seated near the far end zone—a phrase that should never be associated with a musical performance—those screens were not even in sync with the sound traveling towards their seats from the stage 100 yards away.

Almost a full year after the *Rising* tour began, just across the road at the considerably smaller Continental Airlines Arena, Bruce and the E Street Band returned to New Jersey to kick off the final leg of the tour. Back in 2002, that August 7 show at CAA began a barnstorming run that filled out the year with 45 shows in 45 cities. The one-night-stand strategy left the usual demand for tickets to a New Jersey show even more unsatisfied than ever before. An August 5 rehearsal show at the arena, for invited guests, was performed in a mostly empty building; the lucky few at the August 5 show saw a much more cohesive performance than did the sell-out crowd at the August 7 tour opener. Although the band had also played a

series of rehearsal shows at Convention Hall in Asbury Park, opening night was, by even the most charitable assessment, a mess. Technical problems aside, the show was marred by poor pacing and a set half composed of still-unfamiliar *Rising* material. A 22-song set with 11 new songs left many fans unenthused—a sentiment that was magnified by the fact that, unlike tours past, this was the only show in New Jersey.

Multiple-night stands in big cities, usually the normal course of events for a Springsteen tour, were simply not part of the plan in 2002. Not even in New Jersey, where a run of anywhere from six to 15 shows had become a summer tradition during a Springsteen tour. Spring 2003 finally saw the band playing two-night engagements in Brisbane, Rotterdam, London, Helsinki, and Gothenburg. Oddly, London and Rotterdam had three shows before New Jersey even had a second, and the tour had been going on for ten months. In March 2003 came the first announcement of a multiple night stand in the United States, back in Jersey. The much anticipated return of the *Rising* tour to the U.S. promised the return of Bruce's more familiar style of touring. But the relief of the hometown fans was somewhat tempered by an unexpected twist.



TEN NIGHTS? DID YOU SAY TEN NIGHTS?! JULY 24, 2003.

The unfamiliar aspect, which many fans refused to believe until they found themselves purchasing tickets, was that these shows would be outdoor stadium events. These would be Bruce's first American stadium shows since the Amnesty International tour in 1988, and the first proper Bruce Springsteen stadium concerts in the U.S. since the end of the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour in 1985. Announcements of dates came slowly and carefully, as the promoters tested the market for tickets. Giants Stadium, initially announced as a three-night engagement, soon ballooned to a ten-night stand, broken into two separate visits. If it was an unusual scenario the previous summer, when Bruce played one arena show and ticket demand was at an all-time high, the ten shows in the stadium created an even more unusual situation: a supply of Springsteen tickets that exceeded the demand. Tickets were literally being given away in the parking lot—a far cry from the previous summer, when hundreds of people were unable to find a ticket at any price

ELIZABETH GOLDSTEIN PHOTO

BY ROBERT S. BADER

on that very same stretch of blacktop. There were actually empty seats at several of these Giants Stadium shows.

But not every empty seat was a result of no-shows. In 1985, Bruce played six Giants Stadium concerts, for which every seat in the stadium was sold, including the seats behind the stage. This time that would not be the case. The stage was now rain-proof, with a protective covering surrounding the entire stage, making side and rear seating an impossibility. Although TicketMaster inadvertently sold some side tickets with obstructed views, most seats on the side and rear were not put on sale this time around. The 1985 engagement included a rained-out show that was rescheduled a couple of days later. This time, thanks to the new stage setup, there would be no rain outs. "Let it rain," indeed.

When the band hit the stage on July 15, 2003, it marked Bruce's 52nd concert in the New Jersey Meadowlands. (By the end of the run he had played 61 concerts there—45 in the arena and 16 in the stadium.) While the venue may have been less than ideal, it was a much improved experience over the previous summer's tour opener. Naturally, the 88th show of a tour is likely to find the band playing better than they did at the first show. And, by this point, the *Rising* material was more familiar to the audience as well as the band; the show was longer, and a couple of the new songs were dropped, to good effect. Most nights now featured eight or nine songs from *The Rising*, and a few times that figure dropped to seven.

Still, material from *The Rising* made up a sizeable portion of the show—and an audience of 50,000 people per night included a large number of concertgoers who were largely indifferent to it. It's one thing to be at an arena show where a few thousand people in a crowd of 20,000 talk or leave their seats during "Empty Sky." It's another experience entirely when more people than would fit in an arena do it. At the arena shows, Bruce asked the audience for "a little quiet for this next song." In stadiums he should have asked for a lot of quiet. Clearly, many people came to Giants Stadium to hear the likes of "Glory Days," "Hungry Heart," and nothing else.

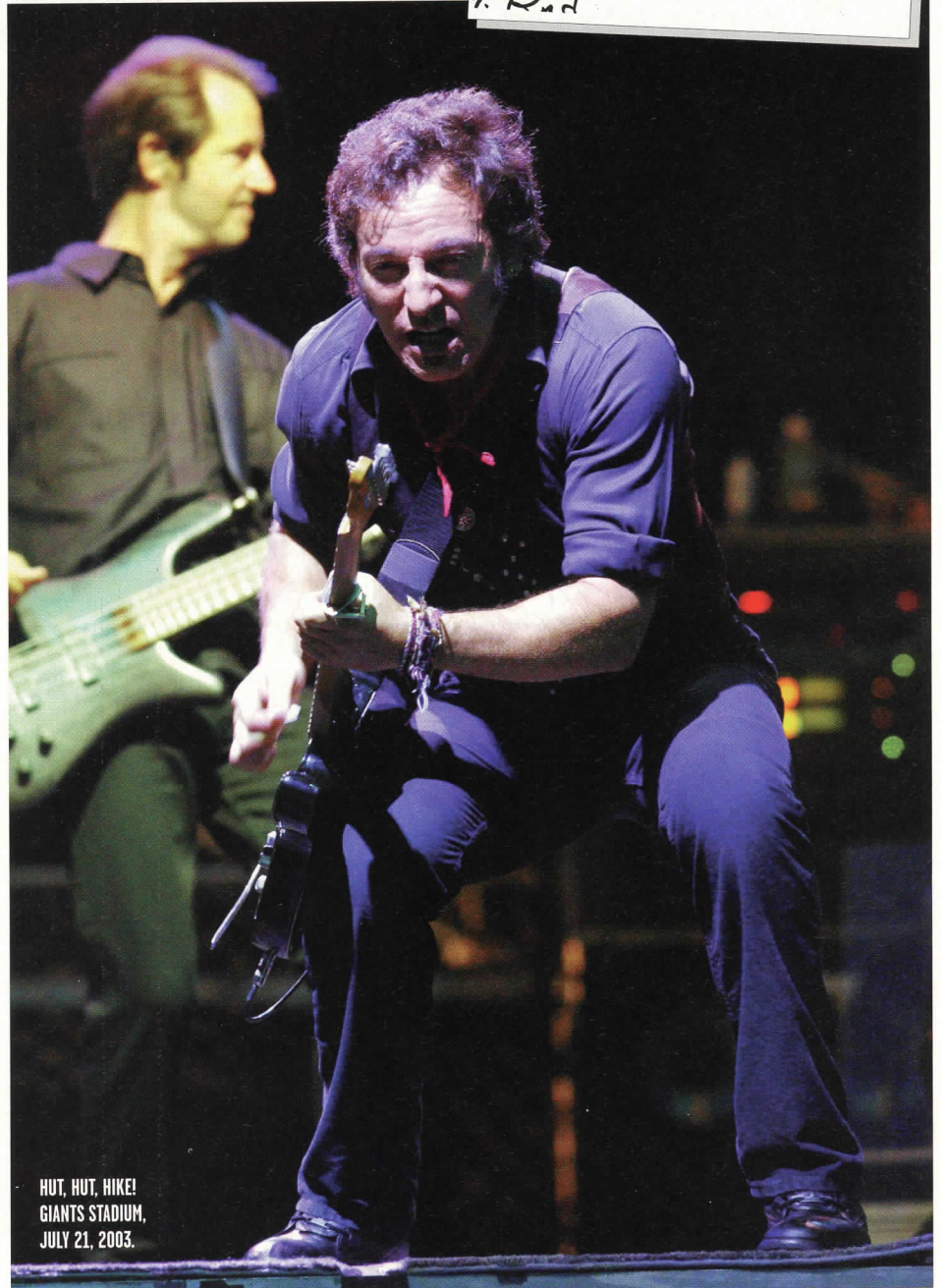
By design, these shows were aimed at two very different audiences. There is a significant difference between the hardcore Bruce Springsteen fan (more than a few of whom attended all ten shows) and the casual concertgoer, who—for perhaps the first time—was able to easily acquire a ticket to see Springsteen. From the perspective of the performer, there may not be a way to make one concert entirely satisfying for both audiences. The hardcore fans have an almost proprietary feeling about seeing a Bruce Springsteen concert. They have an unspoken agreement with the performer that all ten shows will be different because they go to all of them. The more radical-thinking members of that group might even suggest that the casual fan has no right to come to the show if they aren't familiar with every cut on *Tracks* or *Human Touch*. More casual fans, who may not even own all of Bruce's albums, might counter

with the argument that they might have become more hardcore had these selfish people who must go to every show not made it so tough to get tickets all these years.

So what's a rock star to do? Play the hits and make it an unsatisfactory experience for the best customers he has, or play songs that the majority of the audience won't recognize? The answer, of course, is both, which results in thousands of people disrupting the concert for others. Someone who has been to a hundred Springsteen concerts and has had his fill of "Thunder Road" can be just as rude as the guy talking loudly during "You're Missing" or "Racing in the Street." Giants Stadium certainly proved that it works both ways.

So the stadium shows began as a pretty even mix of the new songs and the old favorites. As the shows went on, more obscure and downright stunning surprises got mixed in. There

- 7/15/03 12. Out
GIANTS STADIUM
1. USA
2. Rising
3. Love Song
4. Promised Land
5. My Love
6. Empty Sky
7. Missing
8. Sunny
9. Stormy
10. World's
11. Road
13. Mary's
14. River
15. In the...
16. NB Sunday
Bobby Car
Ran / Land
BAR / Rising
(7) Dancin



HUT, HUT, HIKE!
GIANTS STADIUM,
JULY 21, 2003.

DEB CARVALHO PHOTO



MARK R. SULLIVAN PHOTO

was something for everyone at these shows. By the time it was over, 76 different songs had been played in the ten shows. Many hardcore fans who had vowed to boycott the stadium tour began showing up after the first shows featured a few major rarities. They had by this point accepted the fact that these shows were not aimed specifically at them. So if they wanted to hear "Streets of Fire," "Across the Border" and "Jackson Cage," they had now come to accept that they would also likely hear "Hungry Heart," "Bobby Jean" and "Glory Days." The song that seemed to unite the entire audience each night was "Rosalita," which was played at all ten shows to the disappointment of no one.

Even the most vocal stadium show detractor would have to admit that Bruce basically pulled off the impossible. The shows were, for the most part, excellent. There were, however, a few less-than-spectacular moments. For one thing, the weather did not always cooperate, and the full impact of the rain-or-shine nature of these shows was felt as a violent rainstorm pelted the audience on July 21. To his credit, Bruce ventured out from under his protective tarp onto the ramp at the front of the stage and got himself pretty wet. The storm inspired him to change the set list midway through the show, saying "We usually slow things down now, but we'll keep it fast so you can stay warm." The result was a very loose and long show for the people who stuck around. Several thousand people headed for the exits when the rain got really heavy, again making the distinction between the so-called "real fans" and "casual fans" a very obvious one.

The threatening skies on July 18 had resulted in another treat for the faithful: a rare performance of Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Who'll Stop the Rain." But some of the shows that followed the wet July 18 and July 21 shows were noticeably shorter and less inspiring than usual.

Given the fact that an off night for Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band can easily be the best concert someone may ever see, it's difficult to explain to a one-time attendee that what they had witnessed was not necessarily Bruce at his best. In a venue like Giants Stadium, filled mostly with fans that don't go to more than one show, thousands of people surely thought that an off night was a spectacular show. But a person seeing all ten shows certainly saw the best and worst of Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. And even in the course of a show that didn't turn out as well as could be expected, there were interesting moments. It can be fascinating to watch him work really hard to save the show on a bad night.

A bad night? They do happen, and July 26 was a good example. The spot after "Mary's Place" had become known as a part of the show where a surprise song might appear; those in attendance who were able to recognize that the show wasn't going perfectly anticipated something in that spot to turn things around. It had happened before. But that night Bruce called out for "My Hometown," and an already plodding show practically screeched to a halt. Bruce just seemed tired. Maybe he was feeling the effects of his night in the rain. Who knows? Sometimes Babe Ruth struck out four times in a game. It's a live performance. Anything can happen. By virtue of what it is, it can not possibly be perfect every night.

If a fan saw only one show and it was July 26, they may remember it for the rest of their life as the greatest show ever. Someone seeing several shows could certainly single out that night as the weak link. As the band made its way back to the stage for the encores, the less-than-overwhelming response from the audience prompted Bruce to

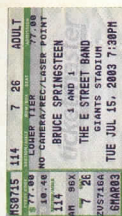
admonish them: "That was some weak-ass encore applause... you better redeem yourselves right now!" At least some of those in attendance interpreted that remark as being directed toward the band. Either way, it was an off night, and Bruce's comments made it clear that he was aware of it.

Nearly all of the seven July shows featured rarely performed songs for the fans that Bruce once referred to as "the aficionados." But by the time the band returned for the final three shows in late August (after playing nine shows in other cities and taking a ten-day break), Bruce was digging even deeper into the songbook. This may in some part have been influenced by the presence at those last three shows of high-definition video cameras. Whatever the reason, the surprises that turned up at these high capacity shows brought pleasure for some and pain for others. After the stunning August 30 show, which included such rarities as "Janey Don't You Lose Heart," "Roll of the Dice," "Across the Border," "This Hard Land," "Raise Your Hand" and "Pretty Flamingo," one young woman was heard wondering how Bruce could do a three-hour concert and not play his greatest song, "Hungry Heart." She should have gone to all ten shows—she'd have heard it three times. And for many of the people who did go to all ten, three was plenty.

Perhaps the single moment that best sums up the Giants Stadium '03 experience came with the first song of the final show on August 31. As the opening chords of "Cynthia," a *Born in the U.S.A.* outtake from the *Tracks* collection, came from a concert stage for the first time ever, there were about 3,000 fans blissfully aware of what they were seeing and 47,000 or so looking at each other, puzzled, wondering what the song was. Redemption had come for the hardcore fans on the final night. Giants Stadium, however briefly, became the intimate venue that no one thought it could be purely by accident. As Bruce and the E Street Band cranked out "Cynthia," you could almost hear a pin drop in that audience—and not because Bruce had asked for a little quiet. 🐾

FRANK DISTASI PHOTO





JULY 15 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: Born in the U.S.A. (acoustic)/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Promised Land/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Sherry Darling/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/The River/Into the Fire/No Surrender/Thunder Road/Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Rosalita."

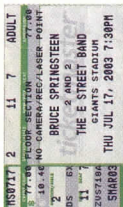
NOTES: "Good evening, New Jersey, it's good to see you," Springsteen tells the Giants Stadium crowd. "We've been all around the world, it's nice to be back home." The first *Rising* show in the States since April opens with the only acoustic "Born in the U.S.A." of the summer leg. "The River" is performed full-band. "We've got seven nights at Giants Stadium, and I wanna tell you what we're gonna do..." Springsteen said by way of introduction to "Seven Nights to Rock," a cover of the 1956 Moon Mullican hit that the E Street Band debuted in Europe and brought back across the pond. Another encore rave-up, the first U.S. "Rosalita" of the *Rising* tour—"This is it!" Bruce said while revving up, "This is the one!"—begins a "Rosie" streak that will run through the final night at Shea, with the song played at every U.S. stadium show. Audibles: "Darkness" and "Thunder Road." In the crowd: Dave Marsh.

PRESS: "CLASSIC ROCKER SAVES HIS BEST SHOW FOR THE HOME CROWD." David Fricke in *Rolling Stone*: "...The *Rising* was the meat and spiritual center of the set, as it was in arenas last year. But Springsteen also set up church on the beach, reaching back for "Sherry Darling" and "Rosalita." And when he pulled out the rapid-fire 1982 studio outtake "My Love Will Not Let You Down," he and the E Street Band fired it into the open air with such force and joy that it was easy to believe that, for tonight, anyway, Giants Stadium was just the Stone Pony without a roof.

ROSIE COMES OUT: Tailgating was insane: tons of tents, lots of grills, gallons of beer. Tons of tickets could be had outside. Scalpers were taking a bath, and many looked panicked and frazzled. If you were determined and the gambling type, you could probably do all ten shows for under \$100. The sound was incredible for a stadium, as was the video on the screens. There was a huge exodus of people as Bruce started "Land of Hope and Dreams." I wonder what they thought when they heard the opening chords of "Rosalita" in the parking lot? "Rosie" was fun but flubbed—it should be refined by Night Ten.... —John Schlicher

LET THERE BE LIGHT: The show opened with the innocuous strumming of Bruce on the 12-string slide guitar, as he wailed out the solo "Born in the U.S.A." Certainly a surprise for the intoxicated masses, but it did have a grounding effect on all of us. "The River" was the musical highlight of the evening, showcasing the vocal tal-

ents and strong keyboards of the E Street Band, and it was nice hearing it in its original context rather than the weird jazzy version played during the Reunion tour. While the band cranked out "Born to Run," the Giants Stadium infrastructure groaned to get the house lights on, the last bank of lights coming sometime around "someday Wendy." Still, it was great to see those many thousands of Tramps all united just this once. —Ernie Barsamian

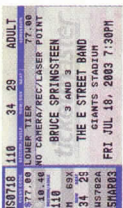


JULY 17 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/Candy's Room/Prove It All Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Growin' Up/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Jungleland/Into the Fire/No Surrender/Thunder Road/Hungry Heart/Ramrod/Born to Run/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

STARTER: The band takes the stage to Frank Sinatra's "Summer Wind."

NOTES: As the videoscreens follow their progress backstage, Springsteen and the E Street Band enter to the strains of Frank Sinatra's "Summer Wind," starting a pre-show bit that will continue for much of the summer leg. "Growin' Up" is dedicated to the "old timers." Though Garry's stand-up bass was brought out onstage after "Mary's Place," Bruce waves off "Meeting Across the River" and goes right into "Jungleland." Also visible onstage from "Mary's Place" onward: a tuba, out of its case and in plain sight (but "Wild Billy" never shows). In the crowd: Whoopi Goldberg



JULY 18 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: Who'll Stop the Rain/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Something in the Night/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/You Can Look (But You Better Not Touch)/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Racing in the Street/Into the Fire/No Surrender/Cadillac Ranch/96 Tears/Bobby Jean/Glory Days/Detroit Medley/Born to Run/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

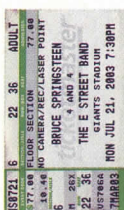
STARTER: "Summer Wind."

NOTES: A rainy night has Bruce seemingly unable to wait for a "Sunny Day," as he omits "You're Missing" for the first time. Garland Jeffreys, who last guested with Bruce at the 2001 Holiday shows, joins in for a tour one-off, the ? and the Mysterians classic "96 Tears." Audibles: "Who'll Stop the Rain," "Bobby Jean," and an abbreviated "Detroit Medley." On the setlist but not played: "Jackson Cage" and "Darlington County." "Land of Hope and Dreams" is dedicated to Bobby Muller.

CRYIN' 96 TEARS IN THE RAIN: The clouds rolled in like big black Humvees as we were walking in the door. We got to our seats as it started to drizzle, so Bruce comes out and starts off with a haunting and powerful "Who'll Stop the Rain." By "Lonesome Day"—watching that Giants Stadium crowd scream "It's all right" in unison was a sight to behold—the rain was pouring down. A real surprise followed: a haunting version of "Something in the Night." He sang it to perfection, even incorporating the desolate moans that I think are so integral to the song.

"You Can Look" was amazing, and the interplay between Steve and Bruce made my heart swell up. The "You can look/but don't touch!" back-and-forth was just too funny. "Racing in the Street" was all Roy's, a beautiful, heartfelt rendition that was one of the standouts of the evening. "Cadillac Ranch" was full tilt and rocking like it was 1985, guitars wailing, with the addition of Soozie's fiddle a really nice touch—a perfect melange of rock 'n' roll, country, and bluegrass.

Bruce was smiling throughout "96 Tears," watching Garland do his thing, and Danny hit every single note perfectly. The funniest part was when Garland didn't want to stop—he tossed his hat and walked to the front of the stage—and I may be wrong, but Bruce had this bemused look as if thinking, "Holy shit, how do I get him to stop?" A really nice gesture by Bruce, and a reminder of why I respect his allegiance to his musical roots. —Miami Mark



JULY 21 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/Jackson Cage/Night/Prove It All Night/Trapped/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/For You/The Promised Land/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Cadillac Ranch/Into the Fire/No Surrender/Spirit in

MISSION STATEMENT: THE P.S.A.

"PEOPLE COME TO MY SHOWS with many different kinds of political beliefs; I like that, we welcome all. There have been a lot of questions raised recently about the forthrightness of our government. This playing with the truth has been a part of both the Republican and Democratic administrations in the past and it is always wrong, never more so than when real lives are at stake. The question of whether we were misled into the war in Iraq isn't a liberal or conservative or republican or democratic question, it's an American one. Protecting the democracy that we ask our sons and daughters to die for is our responsibility and our trust. Demanding accountability from our leaders is our job as citizens. It's the American way. So may the truth will out."

—Bruce Springsteen, Giants Stadium, 7/15/03



the Night/Where the Bands Are/Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Hungry Heart/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Streets of Fire."

STARTER: "Summer Wind."

NOTES: A monster storm, and a monster show, clocking in at over three hours and 27 songs. "You're Missing" is skipped for the second night; "For You" is a full-band version. Lots of audibles: "Trapped," "Prove It All Night," "The Promised Land," "Cadillac Ranch" in place of "Incident" ("we usually slow things down now, but we'll keep it fast so you can stay warm"), "Where the Bands Are," "Bobby Jean," and "Hungry Heart." Special guest Vini "Mad Dog" Lopez drums on "Spirit in the Night." In the crowd: NBA coach Pat Riley, to whom Bruce tosses his harmonica after "The Promised Land" (Riley reportedly caught six of the first seven Jersey shows).

COVER ME: There must be something in the water in Jersey, because when it rains, this guy pulls out all the stops. While not quite equal to the previous rain-soaked barnburner on 7/18, this was a great show with a *long* encore. A lack of real surprises was made up for by Bruce's soaked-to-the-bone enthusiasm and spontaneity. A pre-show announcement warned of approaching severe weather—so severe, in fact, that they said they might have to start the show, have everyone leave their seats and take cover, then return to resume the show when the weather allowed—like that would have worked!

The skies opened up at the start of "Mary's Place," and with the rain came lightning. During the previous show, Bruce seemed to shy away from the catwalks, choosing to stay under cover. Tonight he actually seemed to enjoy being in the pouring rain—he was out there at every opportunity, soaked from head to toe, resigned to play no matter what and use the weather for inspiration. While I would die to see a full-band "Incident" again, it was amazing to see Bruce tear through "Cadillac Ranch" in the pouring rain, while wearing a straw cowboy hat. That hat got a lot of use—he also wore it during "Mary's Place," while slowly strolling the length of the stage in the pouring rain. With his arms opened toward the drenching skies, he looked more like a Southwestern farmer whose prayers of rain were answered than a singer performing in a rock concert.

A couple of times he joked when he walked out in the rain, "This isn't so bad! It's refreshing!" But when he returned to cover and his back was slightly turned to the masses, he made faces to Steve and Patti that said, "It's bad out there." While the bad weather seems to fuel Bruce, I'm sure it's not all good for his voice. During "My City of Ruins," his voice was very hoarse and cracking at times, to the point where it was painful to listen. He joked with us after, thanking everyone for toughing it out in the weather and saying, "Now you all have an excuse for not going to work tomorrow... [feigning sickness] I'm sick!" Let's just hope he doesn't heed his own advice—and reports to work on Thursday. —John Schlicher



LOOSE CHANGE AND HUNGRY HEARTS

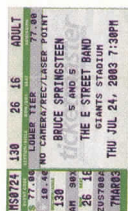
THE SUMMER OF 2003 WILL be remembered by most as the summer the rains came to New Jersey. However, if you work at the Community FoodBank, the summer of 2003 will forever be remembered as "the summer of Bruce Springsteen." At the ten sold-out Giants Stadium concerts, a replica Jersey Boardwalk was constructed outside the stadium complete with everything you would typically see down the shore. There was an obnoxious clown in a dunking booth, plenty of games of chance, greasy boardwalk food, and drinks galore. More than 100 FoodBank staff and volunteers were permitted to collect donations at a complimentary Ferris wheel set up by the Meadowlands Sports Complex. During the concerts, Bruce dedicated "My City of Ruins" to the FoodBank and asked his fans to support us at the gates after the show... and you did!

We are so grateful to Bruce, Patti, and the E Street Band for allowing us to collect before and after the concerts—you walk the walk! Thank you go out to Jon Landau Management for speaking on our behalf and facilitating our comings and goings, to *Backstreets* for continuing to support our efforts whenever and wherever Bruce is involved, and to everyone at the Meadowlands Sports Complex for their hospitality.

A very special thank you to all of the wonderful Bruce fans we met before, during, and after the shows. Many of you stopped by the tent to donate food, money, and tickets, to say hello, to share Bruce stories and offer words of encouragement. We collected more than \$140,000 over the span of the ten nights. Because of your generosity, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey will be able to provide \$1,540,000 worth of food and groceries to those in need in New Jersey. This is possible because we closely watch every penny and can maximize our buying power, so that for every dollar donated, we can provide \$11 worth of groceries.

Thank you again, you made it a truly wonderful experience for all of us, one that we are most thankful for and will always remember.

Kate Leonard
Director of Development
The Community FoodBank of New Jersey



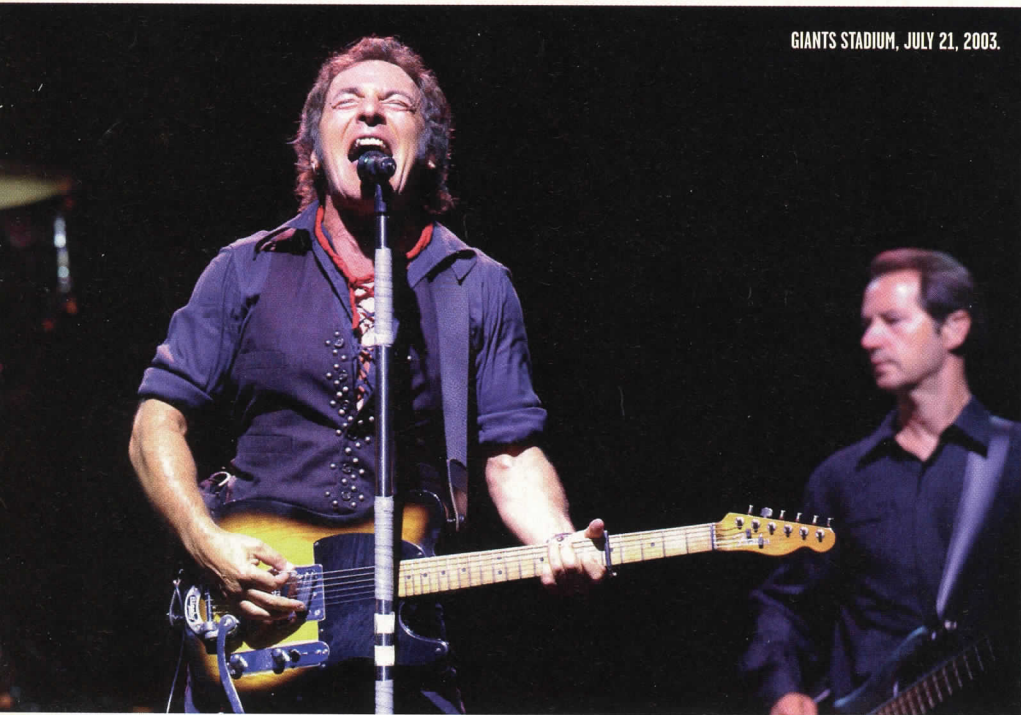
JULY 24 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: The Promised Land/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Streets of Fire/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Working on the Highway/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Meeting Across the River/Jungleland/Into the Fire/No Surrender//4th of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

STARTER: Ennio Morricone's "Once Upon a Time in the West."

NOTES: The second "Streets of Fire" of the tour, and the first tour performance of "Sandy" in the U.S. In the crowd: Bill Walton, New Jersey Net Richard Jefferson, and members of Train.

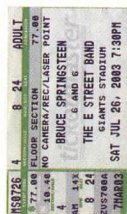
OUT OF GAS: I got in to this show for \$5—post-1970s, who ever thought you could say you got into a Bruce concert for five bucks? The man looked to be out of gas, though, and it was an uninspired show. "The Promised Land" doesn't work for me as an opening number. "Streets of Fire" was nice, but it didn't blow the roof off like it did when I saw it in Lexington. "Sandy" was nice too, but it was lost in a set of encores that they just seemed to walk through. The highlight for me was "Ramrod," when he accidentally ripped the wireless device off his



GIANTS STADIUM, JULY 21, 2003.

DEB CARVALHO PHOTO

back while doing the guitar wraparound trick and was forced to slide the useless guitar back to Kevin. So for the next verse and the shtick with Steve, Bruce was without the guitar, which led him to do every '60s dance move known to man (and some improvised ones) between lines of the song—it was hysterical! When he got to the "it's time to go" bit with Steve, Bruce pleaded, "We gotta go, Stevie... I ain't got no more moves!" —John Schlicher



JULY 26 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: Adam Raised a Cain/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/Atlantic City/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Darlington County/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Two Hearts/No Surrender/Mary's Place/My Hometown/Into the Fire/The Promised Land//Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out/Glory Days/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Kitty's Back" and "Murder Incorporated."

STARTER: Sam Cooke's "Another Saturday Night."

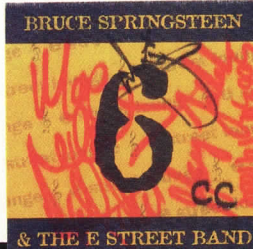
NOTES: A much-anticipated Saturday night show ends up the shortest of this run, at 23 songs. On the setlist, "The Ties That Bind" was slated to open and "Tenth Avenue" to close the main set. The actual opener, "Adam Raised a Cain," is the only Bruce-penned tour premiere of the seven nights. On the setlist but not played: "Point Blank" (for the third night in a row), "Prove It," "This Hard Land," and "My Love Will Not Let You Down." Audibles: "Adam" and "My

Hometown." In the crowd: Ken Ober, the cast and crew of *The Sopranos*.

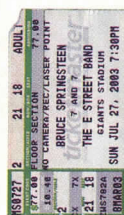
REDEEMING QUALITY: Am I wrong or did Bruce have a mood swing during the main set? The show started out hot. Bruce and everyone in the band appeared to be loose. Then when they started "My Hometown" I turned to my buddy and said, "This sounds just a little off." The band suddenly seemed to be out of sync with Bruce, and subsequently Bruce with the audience. Not "horrible" bad, just off. By the end of the song Bruce looked angry. "Into the Fire" was great, but then "The Promised Land" again was just a little off, cut short, and then Bruce said good night. He left the stage first, followed by the band. A few minutes later everyone came back on stage with a lot more ener-



HOW DID ALL THESE PEOPLE GET IN MY ROOM? JULY 26, 2003.



gy. Then Bruce starts the encore by saying "That is some weak-ass encore applause... You better redeem yourself right now!" Then the rest of show was back to hot. On the ride home from the show we all debated what happened. My wife was shocked that he would chastise his audience, and my buddy Dave agreed. My take was that his words were directed not at the audience, but rather at the band—that Bruce got pissed at the band for their performance and chewed them out during the break, hence the new energy for the encores. —Michael Young



JULY 27 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: Downbound Train/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Candy's Room/Prove It All Night/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Saint in the City/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Meeting Across the River/Backstreets/No Surrender//Kitty's Back/Bobby Jean/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/Seven Nights to Rock

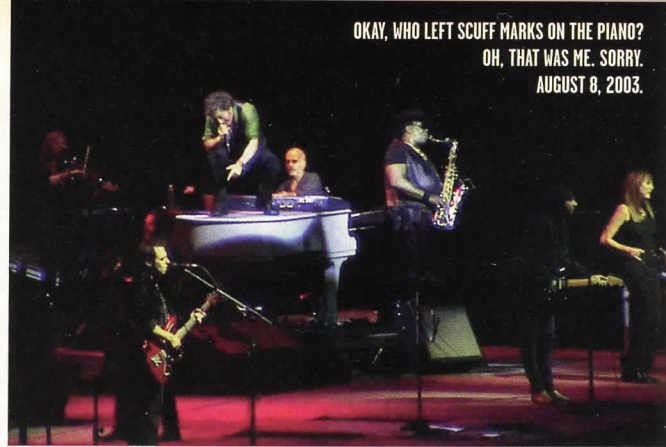
SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Downbound Train," "Cover Me," "Better Days," and "Lucky Town."

STARTER: "Once Upon a Time in the West"

NOTES: The final night of the first Giants Stadium run closes appropriately with "Seven Nights to Rock." Audibles: "Meeting Across the River" and "Bobby Jean." On the setlist but not played: "Does This Bus Stop," "Human Touch," "Countin' on a Miracle," and "Cover Me" as an alternate for "Out in the Street."

I HAD SOMETHING GOING, MISTER, IN THIS WORLD: "A good hot night!" says Bruce, "I've been waiting for one of these!" And it was hot in more ways than one: after a disappointing show on 7/26, this was similarly short, but a return to form. An impressive curve ball from the get-go, "Downbound Train" could even be heard as an acknowledgment of 7/26: "our love went bad, times got hard..." After that the music did the talking, with "Candy's Room" and "Prove It All Night" building on the intensity of the opening trio; a wild "Saint in the City," with the Professor taking everyone to school at the end, brought Atlantic City flashbacks. "Meeting Across the River" into... "Backstreets"? Not that we complained. And before we had much time to wonder where "Jungleland" went, the more noticeable omission was "Into the Fire." This was the first show of the entire tour to give that staple a rest, and "No Surrender" was a refreshing set-closer in its place. "Kitty's Back" had a polarizing effect on the crowd—for everyone who rejoiced in that kind of start to the encores, there were probably two or three who didn't get why Bruce would call this one "something special for Sunday night!" But it was. And the heavens clearly had their eyes on this show: slight sprinkles came during "My City of Ruins" when Bruce sang "And the rain is fallin' down," but the skies held until the final chords of the night had been struck, Seven Nights having just been Rocked. —Christopher Phillips

ROSIE L. DARLING PHOTO



PRESS: "CHORUS OF VOICES GETS 'RISING' AS BRUCE RETURNS TO GILLETTE": Sarah Rodman in the *Boston Herald*: Mother nature must be a Bruce Springsteen fan. The gray skies never delivered on their threat during the Boss' second Gillette Stadium show last night.

The night got off to an explosive start as Springsteen and his brawny E Street Band lit into an incendiary "Adam Raised a Cain," which featured an out-of-the-gate scorching solo from the man himself. It never ceases to amaze how Springsteen can make a crowd of 50,000-plus seem like a true community.... In a set that featured at least nine different songs from the previous night.... especially good were the sizzling "Candy's Room," with Max Weinberg's hissing cymbals sounding like the fuse of a bomb that went off in the chorus, and a jubilant "She's the One." A playful run through "Working on the Highway" turned into a back-porch hootenanny with banjo, washboard, and fiddle.

The night's centerpiece was "Racing in the Street." With its solemn piano opening intoned by Roy Bittan, Springsteen's intense yet soulful vocals and a majestic coda, it struck a deep chord.



AUGUST 6 PNC PARK PITTSBURGH, PA

SETLIST: Take Me Out to the Ballgame/Jackson Cage/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Promised Land/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Streets of Fire/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Working on the Highway/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Blinded by the Light/My Hometown/Into the Fire/No Surrender//Further On (Up the Road)/Bobby Jean/Hungry Heart/Glory Days/Born to Run //My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Serious work on "Fade Away."

NOTES: The inaugural concert at PNC Park is also the first of the E Street Band's ballpark shows. "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" is performed by Nils, Danny, and Roy, all on accordion. Including that opener, the set stretched to 28 songs. No "Youngstown" or "A Good Man is Hard to Find (Pittsburgh)," but local hero Joe Grushecky joins in on "Glory Days," along with his son Johnny on guitar. On the setlist but not played: "Fade Away," replaced by the second tour performance of "Blinded."

THE FIRST PITCH.... From the moment Danny, Nils and Roy walked on stage with their accordions, in a ballpark that was a beautiful setting for a show, you just knew this one was going to be special. As the "Three Tenors" finished up "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," Bruce was all smiles. "Jackson Cage," threw everybody in the crowd for a loop, though—great song, but I'm not sure it works as an opener just because so

few people seemed to know what it was. "My Love" makes a rare appearance in the five spot, followed by a searing "Prove It." The lights then dimmed and "Empty Sky" seemed to be on its way. But out of nowhere came "Streets of Fire." Bruce flubbed the lyrics a bit at the end, but he still wailed on this one, and the band nailed it. And with seven songs prior to "Empty Sky" as opposed to the usual five, you knew all bets were off. "Working on the Highway" was a rare treat, and an extended "Mary's Place" made for one helluva house party in the ballpark. The night's biggest surprise came in the post-"Mary's Place" spot, when Bruce and the band huddled, then he began strumming "Blinded." "Where was I?" he said, before launching into the lyrics. Great, fun song. In the first encore, Bruce came out and seemed to be tuning up for "Further," then he said "Nahhh," and changed guitars. I assumed he would be playing something else, but, sure enough, it was still "Further." Good to hear this one live again. The rest of the encores were standard fare, but if "Rosie" is standard once again, well, hell, I'm all for it. —Anthony Castrovine

...IT'S OVER THE WALL: In the first encore, Bruce continued a long-time Pittsburgh tradition by bringing up Joe Grushecky, accompanied again by his son Johnny, for "Glory Days." There was some confusion (Bruce yelling offstage to "get these men some guitars!") while Joe and Johnny stood there. Joe got one after a few moments and Steve gave Johnny his, banging on a tambourine until he picked up his mandolin. It was a song you expected, but it was cool to see it in that environment; the band, Joe, and Johnny all seemed to have a blast with it. PNC Park's inaugural concert was a great show—Bruce said they'd try for "a home run... a grand slam," and they delivered. They knocked this one out of the park—high over the wall in dead center, into a warm Pittsburgh night. —Bob Mientus

AUGUST 8 LINCOLN FINANCIAL FIELD PHILADELPHIA, PA

SETLIST: The Promised Land/The Rising/Lonesome Day/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Something in the Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Sherry Darling/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Lost in the Flood/Into the Fire/No Surrender//Night/Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

AUGUST 1 GILLETTE STADIUM FOXBORO, MA

SETLIST: The Promised Land/The Rising/Lonesome Day/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Darlington County/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Backstreets/Into the Fire/No Surrender//Mystery Train/Tenth Avenue Freeze-out/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

STARTER: "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head."

NOTES: "You're Missing" and "Into the Fire" return to the set. "Mystery Train" is dedicated to the founder of Sun Records: "[We] just lost one of the great, great, great fathers of rock 'n' roll, without whom none of us would be here tonight... We'll send this out in memory of the great, great Sam Phillips." Bruce also sent out birthday wishes to Patti Scialfa: "I wanna say happy, happy, birthday to you, baby... you sexy thing! One for every year...." Audibles: "The Promised Land" (in place of setlisted opener "Who'll Stop the Rain") and "You're Missing."

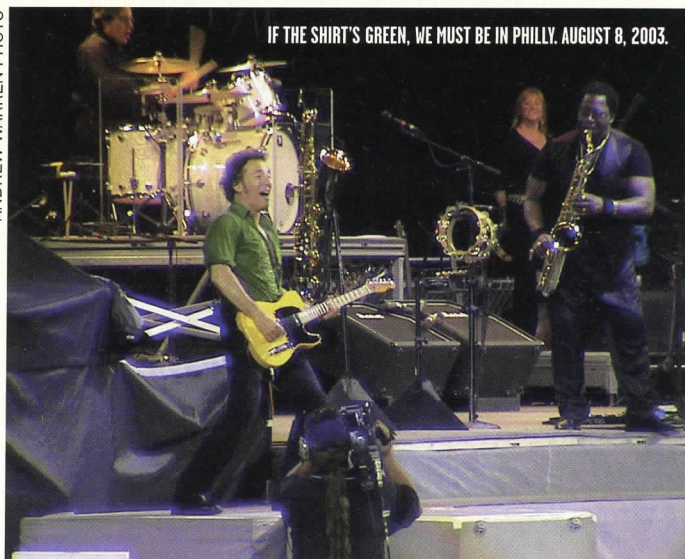
SALSA TIME: Two nights, two shows, and two different sets of emotions. While Saturday's show was much more intense, Friday night was fun and playful (probably due to the rain and fog). They really kicked the crowd into overdrive on "My Love Will Not Let You Down." "Prove It All Night" featured screaming guitar from both Bruce and Steve (Steve's sounding like there was a feedback problem; might've been due to the weather). "Mystery Train" was an incredible surprise—I don't think too many people even knew what it was, beyond Bruce's remarks about Sam Phillips. "Tenth Avenue" was a fun romp, with everybody laughing as Bruce failed to get back to Clarence in time for his line. "Ramrod" featured not one, not two, but three false endings, with Bruce telling Steve it was time to go, because of the fog, he "couldn't see shit!" And soon, as Bruce said, "It's Salsa Time!": "Rosalita" was a great surprise, as I think everybody figured he'd only do it in Jersey. At three hours-plus, nobody went home disappointed. —Bill Curtis

AUGUST 2 GILLETTE STADIUM FOXBORO, MA

SETLIST: Adam Raised a Cain/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Candy's Room/The Ties That Bind/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Working on the Highway/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Racing in the Street/Into the Fire/No Surrender//Night/Bobby Jean/Hungry Heart/Glory Days/Born to Run //My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

STARTER: The Ronettes' "Walking in the Rain."

NOTES: The second tour performance of "Adam Raised a Cain." "Night" is an audible to open the second encore. Bruce says goodbye for now: "See you at Fenway!"



IF THE SHIRT'S GREEN, WE MUST BE IN PHILLY. AUGUST 8, 2003.

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Independence Day" and "Lost in the Flood."

STARTER: The Orlons' "South Street."

NOTES: The first-ever rock concert at the Linc. Wearing his "only in Philly" green shirt, Springsteen breaks out the first full-band "Lost in the Flood" since the 7/1/00 performance captured on *Live in New York City* (a solo-piano arrangement previously turned up on this tour). 8/8/03 is also known as "Karyn's Show," in memory of Karyn Lockhead, who died of cancer shortly before this concert she would have attended. Her husband, Sean, fulfills his promise to make a request in her name, and Springsteen plays "Bobby Jean" as a dedication.

PRESS: "THE BOSS DELIVERS IN SHOW AT THE LINC." Tom Moon in the *Inquirer*: "...Springsteen, the 53-year-old leader of what may be rock's most invigorating road band, was the perfect rabble-rouser to test the mettle of the new palace.... 'The Rising' was particularly surprising: indoors, at Springsteen's First Union Center visit in October, the piece plodded on forever. Out under the open sky, in a bowl far more intimate than the Vet, it grew wings."

Sounds definitely resonate in there. Springsteen enjoyed the way his voice hung over the Linc during "Something in the Night." As usually happens in a vast space, the sound was more crisp closer to the source. In the upper deck, the base didn't whomp the same way, and the guitars were muddy. But even in the nosebleed seats, it was an improvement over the Vet.

When he first addressed the crowd, Springsteen vowed that he and his crew would do "the best they could" to break the Linc in properly. They did that and then some...

"This is Philadelphia, we expect excellence," he said. "The music has got to be righteous... And, at your service, you've got to have the greatest little house band in all the world."

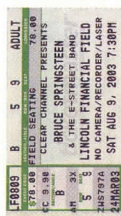
Indeed, the E Street Band is one of those rare examples of musical chemistry that can't be explained by its individual elements. It has a sense of rhythm that is majestic and brutally powerful, yet even its heaviest music has a giddy, it's-only-rock-and-roll buoyancy.

When these musicians play, they don't merely put muscle behind Springsteen's roaring

voice, which was sure and strong all night. Building atop Max Weinberg's basic backbeat, they lift it up, surround it with sweet B3-organ chords and the slightest echoey twang from a lone guitar.

They provide relief from the weight of the anthems and leave space in the story songs for mysteries to grow. And when, during "Out in the Street," Springsteen reprised a few lines of "South Street," they were right there with him, making the left turn. Cruising.

All night long, even on the stuff they've played 97 times before on the Rising tour, it was clear everybody on stage was having fun. Not the manufactured enthusiasm of the well-paid rock star, but the kind it's impossible to fake....



AUGUST 9 LINCOLN FINANCIAL FIELD PHILADELPHIA, PA

SETLIST: Adam Raised a Cain/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/Trapped/For You/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Spirit in the Night/Worlds Apart/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Tougher Than the Rest/Into the Fire/Thunder Road/Where the Bands Are/I'm a Rocker/Hungry Heart/Glory Days/Born to Run/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

STARTER: "Another Saturday Night."

NOTES: The third Saturday night show to open with "Adam Raised a Cain." The first "Tougher Than the Rest" since Europe. Other than the unshakable "Born to Run," an entirely different first encore from 8/8. Jon Landau plays guitar on "Dancing in the Dark."

TOUGHER THAN SOME OF THE REST: Very nice opener with "Adam Raised a Cain"—excellent guitar solo by Bruce. "Trapped" was a show highlight, the audience reaction was tremendous, and "For You" that followed was a very nice surprise. "Spirit"—while not a complete surprise, this being Philly—sounded great, much better than many of the older performances I've seen at the Spectrum. Both "Spirit" and "For You" were full-band versions.

At first, I was tremendously disappointed to get "Tougher Than the Rest." I said to my wife, "Next up is the 'epic song,' maybe 'Backstreets,' 'Racing in the Street,' 'Jungleland'..." and to get "Tougher" was a downer. That said, they performed it beautifully, finishing with a elegant Bruce guitar solo. The first encore had a surprising selection of songs, and they really played their hearts out, but I couldn't help feeling that both "Where the Bands Are" and "I'm a Rocker" are pretty weak compared to the rest of Bruce's catalog. —Jack Grosso

AUGUST 11 LINCOLN FINANCIAL FIELD PHILADELPHIA, PA

SETLIST: From Small Things/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/Be True/Atlantic City/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Darlington County/It's Hard to Be a Saint in the City/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Streets of Philadelphia/Into the Fire/Thunder Road/Incident on 57th Street/I'm Going Down/Ramrod/Born to Run/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Pretty Flamingo/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/I'm a Rocker

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Streets of Philadelphia" and "From Small Things."

NOTES: The tour premiere of "From Small Things" to open, Bruce's first performance of the song in ten years. More tour premieres: "I'm Goin' Down," a full-band "Streets of Philadelphia," and Manfred Mann's "Pretty Flamingo," for the first time since 1978. Philly references in "Out in the Street" include Nils singing, "I'm talkin' 'bout South Street, baby!" According to Philly DJ Ed Sciakys, who was in the house, "Thunder Road" replaced the set-listed "No Surrender" at the request of his daughter Monica (after it was over, Bruce turned toward the Sciakys and said, "Okay?").

THE SHOW TO BEAT ALL SHOWS: Had someone told me following the ho-hum first show of the *Rising* Tour in 2002 that I would eventually see a *Rising* show that began with "From Small Things" and ended with "I'm a Rocker," I would have called them crazy. Lo and behold, a year later, I saw not only that—I saw my best Springsteen show ever, and in a stadium no less! You could feel the emotion and anticipation rise over the first two nights leading up to this last night in Philly, but remembering how Bruce dropped the ball on the last night in Philly in '99 (following two incredible shows including the legendary birthday show), I knew an incredible show this time around was not a sure thing.

But he made up for '99, and then some. I don't know what forces came together to give us this show—the full moon? The threatening rain clouds? The oppressive Philly humidity? The anticipation stemming from the previous two nights?—but something clicked, and we got the show to beat all shows.

To see him playing off the huge full moon rising over the opposite side of the stadium was priceless. Instead of "Boss Time" during "Ramrod," he howled like a wolfman and encouraged everyone to do the same. Bruce was looking up at the moon, scratching himself wildly, baring his teeth like fangs, growling and contorting his face. Steve and Clarence joined in. At the end of "Ramrod," Bruce was walking around stiff-legged with his arms out in front of him, like the Frankenstein monster. It looked like Steve was going to pee his pants.

The true highlight, however, was undoubtedly "Pretty Flamingo." I haven't heard Bruce sing that beautifully since... well, maybe never. It was slow, tender and captivating—not a soul in the stadium moved, whether to head for the parking lot or make a last bathroom break. It was a song that many in the building were not

familiar with, but everyone—regardless of their “Bruce IQ”—was captivated by the impromptu performance.

The crowd was so friggin’ loud at the end of “Dancing,” banging on the new seats of the stadium (Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie was probably having a heart attack), there was no way he was going to end without doing one more. “I’m a Rocker” wasn’t smooth by any means, but it was an unexpected send-off, and in that sense it was the perfect way to conclude a night that shattered all expectations. —John Schlicher

AMAZING SHOW: “I’m Goin’ Down” was the audible to end all audibles. Early on in the show, the video screen caught a pair of “I’m Goin’ Down” signs in the pit. After “Incident” opened the encore, Bruce says “We’re continuing with the requests, and we’re going to play one we haven’t done since 1986. I’m not even sure I have the right guitar, but since I’ve got it, it’s the right one now. I’m going to start off and hopefully everyone in the band remembers their parts and will join in.” It was a great, off-the-cuff version, especially considering that Steve presumably hasn’t played it since he recorded it. He was watching Bruce the whole time, trying to keep up.

The pairing of “Darlington County” and “Saint in the City” was awesome. “Darlington” sounded great, especially with Soozie’s fiddle playing at the end, and “Saint in the City” was just as insane as it was at Giants Stadium. “Badlands” got two false endings because the crowd was so into it, as did “Dancing in the Dark.” Just way too many “holy shit” moments tonight. For me the biggest one was “Pretty Flamingo”—I was only expecting a verse as an intro to “Rosie,” but Bruce and the band played the whole damn thing. Forget the “stadium show” qualifier when you say that it was an amazing show in Philly tonight. It was an amazing show, period. —Joe Lewin

AUGUST 13 U.S. CELLULAR FIELD CHICAGO, IL

SETLIST: Adam Raised a Cain/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Prove It All Night/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Empty Sky/You’re Missing/Waitin’ on a Sunny Day/Working on the Highway/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary’s Place/Backstreets/Into the Fire/No Surrender//Where the Bands Are/Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

STARTER: Frank Sinatra’s “My Kind of Town.”

NOTES: An extended “Sunny Day” due to technical problems (along with the three reprises of “Dancing in the Dark”) may help explain why, at 25 songs, the show lasted three hours and ten minutes. Alternates on the setlist but not played: “Spirit in the Night” and “Meeting”/“Jungleland.” “Seven Nights to Rock” is an audible. In the crowd: Lara Flynn Boyle

PRESS: “YOU GOTTA BELIEVE.” Jeff Wisser in the *Sun-Times*. For the skeptics, the carny-barker exhortations, the frat-boy shenanigans between Springsteen and longtime compatriots... the shimmying, shaking, and shouting, can be dismissed as so much contrivance.

What the nonbelievers could not deny on Wednesday is that the man they call “The Boss” was at the top of his game on this warm summer night in the home of the White Sox. He may not have pitched a perfect game. (“Where the Bands Are” and “My Love Will Not Let You

Down” were underwhelming choices for the night’s setlist, the quieter moments including “Empty Sky” were lost in the cavernous ballpark, and the performance of “Born to Run” seemed perfunctory.) But he was throwing strikes all night, and when he needed the high heater—the howling show opener “Adam Raised a Cain,” the grand opera that is “Backstreets,” and a bracing cover of Moon Mulligan’s “Seven Nights to Rock” come to mind—he was able to, in the words of Sox announcer Ken “Hawk” Harrelson, “bring it.”...

LIGHTS OUT, UN-HUH! Circumstances create an epic “Waitin’ on a Sunny Day.” At the end of the left ramp, Bruce catches and puts on a Sinatra-style hat, then runs comically like an old man to the end of the ramp on the other side before heading back to return the hat. Toward what would normally be near the end of the song, the stage lights go out during Clarence’s solo. Bruce just keeps the crowd singing the chorus as Steve grabs a flashlight, lighting Bruce as he dances and climbs upside down on his microphone stand. Bruce then grabs the flashlight,

mugs and shines it down on himself during a knee slide. Patti then holds the flashlight on Bruce before a lone spotlight from the left-field upper deck is turned on to light Bruce. Comiskey Park’s baseball lights are fired up, illuminating the entire place as Bruce finally brings the song to an end as the stage lights eventually return. “Just when you think you’ve seen it all...” he says. “We don’t need no stinkin’ lights!” —Dave Miller

- | | | |
|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| 1. Adam | 8/13 | 13. Mary's |
| 2. Rising | CHICAGO | 14. Backstreets |
| 3. Lonesome | | meets... Kier Egle |
| 4. Piss/Pain | | 15. I'm B... |
| 5. My Love | | 16. No Surrender |
| 6. Empty | | Where... Backs |
| 7. Rising | | Bobby P. |
| 8. Sunny | | Ramrod |
| 9. Working/Spiral | | BRB |
| 10. Worlds | | Cif Poy |
| 11. Bad | | Hard Dan |
| 12. Our | | |



MONSTER MASH: THE FULL MOON
ALWAYS BRINGS OUT THE CRAZIES.
AUGUST 11, 2003.

AUGUST 16 PACIFIC BELL PARK SAN FRANCISCO, CA

SETLIST: The Promised Land/The Rising/Lonesome Day/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Something in the Night/Empty Sky/You’re Missing/Waitin’ on a Sunny Day/Darlington County/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary’s Place/Across the Border/Into the Fire/No Surrender//Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes the full-band “Across the Border.”

STARTER: “Take Me Out to the Ballgame.”

NOTES: The E Street Band premiere of “Across the Border” is a full-band arrangement featuring Danny on accordion.

PRESS: *Sports Illustrated* football writer Peter King on si.com: “[Before the show,] E Street Band drummer Max Weinberg was in intense pain. He had blown out his back a week or so earlier, and he wasn’t able to give it any rest. A delegation of 49ers, who were also backstage fans, found out the concert was in danger of being postponed. “When we got to the stadi-

um," San Francisco scout and noted Springsteenaholic Billy Devaney told me, "Max was doubled over, sort of in the fetal position. There was no way he could go out there like that." The tour manager was talking to Bruce and the band about postponing the show if Max couldn't go on. So the Niners people called the team's training staff and asked what they could do to get Weinberg relaxed enough so he could make it through the show. An injection of Tordal was recommended. Tordal is an anti-inflammatory commonly used by NFL players; one former player told me last week that probably 30 players per team use it each week. You get an injection Saturday, feel great Sunday and better than you should Monday, then feel like crap on Tuesday when the effects wear off. Anyway, the tour manager located a doctor at Pac Bell, and the doc wrote a prescription for Tordal to be acquired at a downtown San Francisco drug store. The prescription was delivered to the stadium by police car, sirens blaring. The doctor injected Weinberg shortly before the show, and just before he took the stage he was walking around, amazed he felt so good.

CALIFORNIA LOVE: It's known as the "best address in baseball," and for three hours on Saturday night, Twenty Four Willie Mays Plaza was home to Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. Unlike game nights at Pacific Bell Park, where Giants fans go in knowing there's at least a 50% chance they'll leave unsatisfied,

everyone walked out a winner on this cool summer evening.

The fourth of five California stops on the *Rising Tour*, Pac Bell marked the first time Bruce and the E Streeters had played in the city and county of San Francisco since the *Darkness* tour paused at Winterland in December 1978. Appropriately enough, the *Darkness* album was well-represented in the setlist, which opened with "The Promised Land" and included a rare and particularly powerful reading of "Something in the Night."

Acknowledging the need for "a little California music," a hauntingly beautiful full band arrangement of "Across the Border" provided a solid Tom Joad moment for Northern California fans, who had previously enjoyed a one-off playing of "Sinaloa Cowboys" on the Reunion tour at Oakland in 1999.

Enjoying the mild one-sweater night, Bruce cheerfully noted six songs into the set, "We are talkin' some nice weather here! I ain't even sweatin' my ass off!" It wasn't for a lack of trying. He took every opportunity he could to run back and forth between the right and left center field alleys in front of the stage, scarcely winding himself in the process. For those of us who had witnessed a visibly under-the-weather Bruce grind his way through a draining evening at Sacramento on 4/9/03, San Francisco was a welcome return to form. Hopefully, the next tour will consider the Golden State as something more than an afterthought. —Ted Benson

DOBBY 75 00
C2 18 50
NO CAMERA/REC/LASERS
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
DOORS AT 6:00PM
THE E STREET BAND
2003/04
RESIDUALS
SUN AUG 17, 2003 7:00PM

AUGUST 17 DODGER STADIUM LOS ANGELES, CA

SETLIST: The Promised Land/The Rising/Lonesome Day/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Prove It All Night/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/You Can Look (But You Better Not Touch)/Darlington County/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Across the Border/Into the Fire/No Surrender//I'm a Rocker/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: With doors already open, early arrivals could witness the band run through soundcheck staples "The Rising" and "Lonesome Day."

STARTER: The Beach Boys' "California Girls."
NOTES: Setting Dodger Stadium apart from a similar show the previous night: "Darkness," "You Can Look," and "I'm a Rocker." The last of these was played at fan Jason Berkley's request, for the second time. In Cincy on 11/12/02, Berkley's sign said he "came 2,000 miles to beg for 'I'm a Rocker.'" A similar sign got the job done once again; this time, it was 26 miles.

THIS IS HOLLYWOOD: Much to my dismay, the band does virtually the same set as the night before. This was the only show in Southern California and, amazingly, it wasn't close to being sold out. The sound was muffled at the beginning of the set, which is par for the course during concerts at baseball stadiums. Early on, Bruce & Co. were a bit sluggish, but later picked up the pace. Following "Darkness," Bruce referenced California's three ring circus of a recall election: "Who is the governor? I don't know!" Later, Tinseltown would be referenced by the band several times: when everyone takes their turn on "Out in the Street," Nils sang, "Talkin' Hollywood & Vine, baby!" During "Mary's Place," Bruce's tailor-made Cali shtick was hilarious: first he asked, "Are you ready for a Hollywood house party?" And for the band introductions, Clarence was called "the man who came to town to clean up the fucking mess goin' down." That got plenty of cheers. —George A. Paul

RS02281 GA 649 48
77 00 GEN ADMISSION
NO CAMERA/REC/LASER POINT
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
DOORS AT 6:00PM
THE E STREET BAND
2003/04
RESIDUALS
THU AUG 28, 2003 7:30PM

AUGUST 28 EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ GIANTS STADIUM

SETLIST: The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/Darkness on the Edge of Town/The Fuse/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Be True/Worlds Apart/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Independence Day/Into the Fire/No Surrender//From Small Things/Hungry Heart/Ramrod/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Lost in the Flood."

STARTER: "Summer Wind."
NOTES: Back at Giants Stadium, where high definition cameras are filming the last three of ten nights. "The Fuse" reappears for the first time since the European leg. Rarities by

NEXT STOP... LUCKY TOWN!
PAC BELL PARK, SAN FRANCISCO, CA
AUGUST 16, 2003.



MARGARET MISH PHOTO

request: "Be True" and "Independence Day," the latter a tour debut. Bobby Bandiera guests for another rarity, "From Small Things." And the "Dancing in the Dark" finale finally had Bruce dancing again with a lucky girl in the first row: ten-year-old Ally Ottina held a sign that read, "May I have this dance?"

UNLUCKY EIGHT-BALL: A somewhat disappointing show. Bruce seemed to be struggling with his voice and looked tired. This one was a bit shorter than the two others I attended at Giants Stadium as well. In short, not a vintage Bruce show—I hope he gets his voice back for the weekend. —Marc Alterman

AUGUST 30 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

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NO CAMERA/REC/LASER POINT				
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN				
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THE E STREET BAND				
GIANTS STADIUM				
SAT AUG 30, 2003 7:30PM				

SETLIST: Janey, Don't You Lose Heart/The Rising/Lonesome

Day/Candy's Room/Trapped/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Roll of the Dice/Because the Night/Badlands/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Across the Border/Into the Fire/Thunder Road/This Hard Land/Raise Your Hand/Glory Days/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Pretty Flamingo/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDHECK: Includes "Janey, Don't You Lose Heart," "Lucky Town," "Raise Your Hand," and "Roll of the Dice."

STARTER: "Another Saturday Night."

NOTES: Filming continues, as Bruce and the band bring the Giants Stadium stand to its peak with the final two shows. Eleven songs not played the night before. Ten songs in the encores. Two guest appearances: Emmylou Harris on "Across the Border," and Marah brothers Serge and Dave Bielanko on "Raise Your Hand." The latter is a tour premiere, as is opener "Janey." Played for only the second time on the tour are "Roll of the Dice" and "Pretty Flamingo." Starting a trend, "Because the Night" replaces "Worlds Apart." Springsteen dedicates "Thunder Road" to the family and memory of Jim Berger, who was killed in the September 11 tragedy. In the crowd: Bobby Muller, who attended the show with Harris.

PRESS: Barry A. Jeckell for Billboard.com: The U.S. Labor Day holiday weekend is usually reserved for parties marking the unofficial end of the summer, so a pair of Bruce Springsteen shows at Giants Stadium certainly fit the bill. But as Saturday (August 30) and Sunday's concerts were the last of a record ten at the venue, they made polishing off the season a bitter-sweet affair for thousands of New Jerseyans.

It should be explained that this Springsteen

homestand was the event of the New Jersey summer. Over the past few months, rarely did conversations pass without discussion of which or how many shows one was planning to attend, who might have extra tickets, what rarities and favorites would hopefully pop up in the setlists, and how much we despise Philly for routinely getting the most adventurous shows of any given tour...

A mediocre show by our standards would blow away fans in most other locales. And through this run of 10, there have been what we consider to be clunkers—staid sets with too much from *The Rising*, inclusion of "Out in the Street" for the umpteenth time, and even seemingly phoned-in versions of the holy grail: "Rosalita," which until recently was a concert rarity, but has become a staple of the second encore on the tour's U.S. stadium leg...

Luckily, the Aug. 30-31 shows brought out the best in Springsteen and his mates in the E Street Band. The setlists were varied and peppered with standouts such as "Spirit in the Night," "Because the Night" and even the cataclysmic "Lost in the Flood" from 1973's *Greetings From Asbury Park, N.J.*...

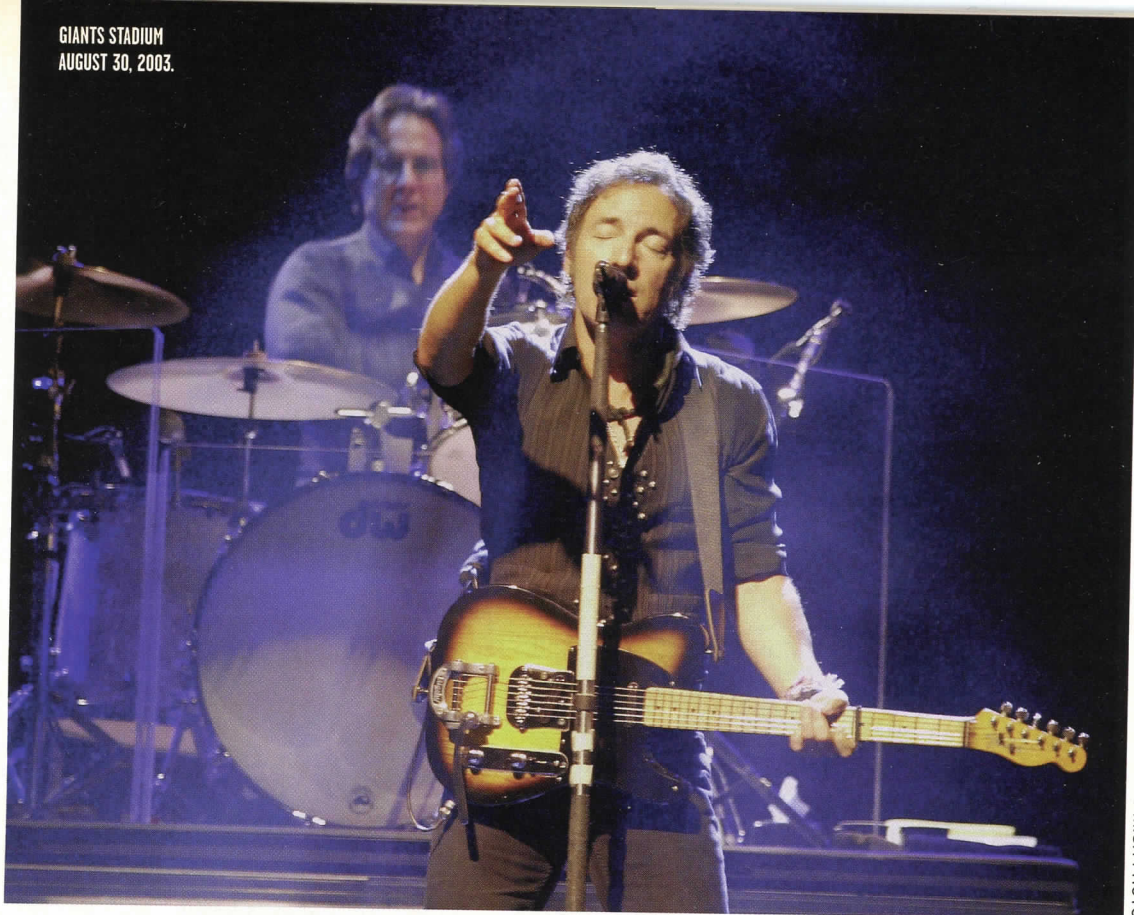
On their worst night, Springsteen and the E Street Band put on a better show than almost anyone in rock 'n' roll. And even though there's still a month left in this tour and the probable addition of as many as four shows nearby at New York's Shea Stadium, nothing can top Bruce sealing the summer in Jersey. He's done us proud once again.

A PIECE OF HISTORY: August 30 was, quite simply, pure magic. From the opening notes of "Janey, Don't You Lose Heart" to the first solo in "The Rising," where he completely and totally nailed it above and beyond anything before,

you just knew this was going to be a show for the memory banks. On "Candy's Room," the crowd in the pit shouts the words along with Bruce with as much power, passion, and conviction as that song's ever had, a moment where the audience is truly one with the artist. "Trapped" followed, and it's just more of the same—the crowd shouts the chorus so loudly Bruce looks almost startled. "Because the Night" is nothing short of incendiary.

Later in the show, an additional microphone is brought out and we're all abuzz—who can it be? Out walks Emmylou Harris, who joins Bruce for a beautiful version of "Across the Border." After "This Hard Land," another microphone is brought out *again*, and Bruce mentions "a cool band from Philadelphia." The guys from Marah walk out, and you think it's going to be another standard—it's gotta be, right? And then those opening notes of, oh my god, "Raise Your Hand"?! It's an old, soulful setlist favorite that we haven't seen in years.

And just when you think you can't take it any more, out of nowhere comes "Pretty Flamingo," the near-mythological cover that was played for the first time since 1978 at the already-legendary 8/11 show in Philadelphia. A song that wouldn't even make my list of "Songs I Would Love To Hear" because you think it's just not possible. To me, "Flamingo" represents a whole other side of Springsteen that we don't get to see any more, those early days of rambling talks to the crowd, of a joy and an innocence that we no longer have. He used to tell this long story about a girl he used to see walking down the street, and how he never had the nerve to go talk to her, and that all these years later, he thought about hiring a private detective to find her. It's a silly story, now, kind of

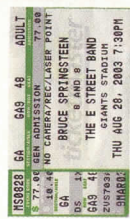


MARGARET MISH PHOTO

GIANTS STADIUM
AUGUST 31, 2003.

corny, I guess, but charming and wistful and heartbreaking all the same. Even without the rap now, "Pretty Flamingo" is still a song that makes the entire stadium (by all reports) stand still and shut the fuck up. They knew they were seeing a piece of history.

I can't remember the last time I heard "Rosalita" myself, probably 1988. And I knew he had been playing it again, but I kind of forgot about it. So when the band kicks into it after "Flamingo," I'm honestly caught off guard. It's just like an old familiar friend returning home. It's such a happy, purely joyful song, it always caused pandemonium and sheer jubilation, and in 2003, it still does. He plays it like he means it, too, without any grudges or sighs or rolling of the eyeballs. That's the thing about Bruce—if he's going to play something, he's going to go balls-out and *play it*. I know people don't think that "Thunder Road" has any power or presence any more, but I have to disagree. It's not going to be the same as it was in 1978, but that doesn't mean it isn't heartfelt or delivered with meaning. Same with "Rosie." —Caryn Rose



AUGUST 31 GIANTS STADIUM EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ

SETLIST: Cynthia/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/Lucky Town/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Spirit in the Night/Because the Night/Badlands/Two Hearts/No Surrender/Mary's Place/Lost in the Flood/Into the Fire/The Promised Land/Kitty's Back/Glory Days/Born to Run//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/Jersey Girl

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Cynthia" and "Frankie."

NOTES: The final night of a ten-show run that broke Springsteen's own record, set by the six shows there in 1985 on the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour; the *New York Times'* Michael Wilson called this 2003 stand "one of the biggest stories in open-air entertainment since the Christians and the lions." The film crew is back for the third show in a row. The world premiere of "Cynthia," and the tour debut of "Lucky Town." The second *Rising* performance of Tom Waits'

"Jersey Girl," the first with the full band. "Mary's Place" includes the first verse and chorus of "I Don't Want to Go Home." At the end of his standard PSA, Springsteen begins adding a plug for Al Franken's *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them*. Jon Landau plays guitar on "Dancing in the Dark." In the crowd: New York Mets Al Leiter, Joe McEwing, Jay Bell, and Grant Roberts, along with assistant coach Denny Walling.

PRESS: "BRUCE DIGS DEEP FOR N.J. CLOSER." Kelly-Jane Cotter in the *Asbury Park Press*: Think back to when summer was a pleasure yet to come and you were battling busy signals to get through to Ticketmaster for some Bruce Springsteen tickets. When you finally got through, and you had to decide which of ten Giants Stadium shows to attend, you were rolling the dice, weren't you?

As it turned out, on many nights, you would've seen a decent show. On a few nights, a tepid show. But if you got tickets to last night—the final night—you know now that you lucked out.

To hear "Spirit in the Night" followed by "Because the Night" makes for a fine night. To see Springsteen abandon the set list after an hour is to realize that the entertainer is also being entertained. After more than a year of tour dates, Springsteen can dig deep and dig it.

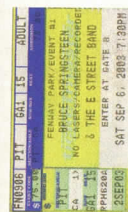
"Welcome to the last New Jersey house party of the summer," he told his audience early in the set. "I think I'm gonna cry. Well, we're going to try to ring it out in style for you."...

They opened with "Cynthia," [which] boded well for a more spontaneous show and an adventurous setlist. Often Springsteen will stick to a tried-and-true formula for opening and closing nights, perhaps because reviewers are usually at those shows. And, for the fans and critics who are repeat customers on every tour, that can get kind of—dare we say it—deadly dull. But last night was not like that at all. Springsteen was relaxed and in good humor.... The band was in fine form, and the set list was all over the place....

WITH ALL HER CHARMS: A great show, with a setlist for the gods—not the same spark as Saturday, but not that significant a difference. Tonight, the rarities just kept pouring out, one after the other, to the point that you were glad for a "Glory Days" so you could stop and catch your breath. Opening with "Cynthia," which had never been done before... "Night" tumbling down and making me feel the way I did the first time I heard the *Born to Run* album... the opening notes to "Spirit in the Night" and my hands are in the air, old-school, I couldn't even tell my sister what it was because I was so overwhelmed that it was happening. However, nothing prepared me for the moment when we heard those looming, ominous chords that open "Lost in the Flood." The piano and the drums and the guitars all rain down like thunder: huge, loud, majestic sounds pouring off the stage. It's epic, plain and simple. I've never seen this one live, and it was stunning. And just when I thought we'd seen it all, those soulful opening notes to the legendary "Kitty's Back" caused a minor riot in the pit.

Portions of tonight's show are being videotaped and recorded. By entering, you are agreeing that your likeness can be used for any purpose by Thrill Hill Productions.

And then, when they're done with the standard encores, he clearly doesn't want to leave—there's still some unfinished business here, and he knows it. The most popular song requested over the two nights—I saw big banners even up in the 300 level asking for it: his cover of Tom Waits' "Jersey Girl". The stadium lights are still on, everyone's still on their feet, no one is heading for the exits to beat the traffic out of the parking lot tonight. Everyone knows this one and everyone's singing it, and even the ones who don't know the words know what it is and appreciate the symbolism, the last song of the ten-night New Jersey stand. I am not that ashamed to admit that I am crying hard and openly, tears streaming down my cheeks, even though I'm loving every second of it. The diehards would have rather seen another rarity, the average fans would have loved another hit, but there was no other way he could have closed these shows. It was simply and truly a moment of beauty, and tribute, and appreciation. —Caryn Rose



SEPTEMBER 6 FENWAY PARK BOSTON, MA

SETLIST: Take Me Out to the Ballgame/Diddy Wah Diddy/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Be True/The Ties That Bind/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Janey, Don't You Lose Heart/Because the Night/Badlands/No Surrender/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Across the Border/Into the Fire/The Promised Land/Bobby Jean/Hungry Heart/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/Dirty Water

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Cynthia," "Janey," and "Dirty Water."

NOTES: The first full concert at Fenway in 30 years, since Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder played a relocated Newport Jazz Festival in 1973. In the '90s, McCartney's request to play there was turned down. With the Red Sox in New York (where they creamed the Yankees 11-0), Danny fills Fenway with "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" on organ. "Land of Hope and Dreams" is dropped from the set for the first time on either the *Rising* tour or the Reunion tour. In its place is a full-band "Born in the U.S.A.," the first since 3/11/03. Perennial Boston guest Peter Wolf returns for "Dirty Water." Jon Landau plays on "Dancing in the Dark." In the crowd: Ric Ocasek, David Halberstam, Congressmen John Tierney and Patrick Kennedy.

CHURCHIFYIN': During the rollicking "Mary's Place," Bruce called for a "rock 'n' roll baptism," a "rock 'n' roll bar mitzvah," and, perhaps most importantly to the long-suffering crowd of 36,000 Red Sox fans, a "rock 'n' roll exorcism." He's made this speech before. But nowhere else has it seemed to have as much meaning as in Fenway—a ballpark that serves as a house of worship to Greater New England, still fighting the Curse of the Bambino. Sprinting from stage left to stage right and literally bowing down to the Green Monster, Springsteen knew exactly what he was doing. Let it never be said that the Boss doesn't know his history.

Throughout the night, Bruce & Co. peppered the show with references to Boston and "the soul of the city." Entering to organist Danny Federici's "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," during which "it's root, root, root for the Red Sox" was screamed into the night by a sea of desperate voices, to the opening cover of "Diddy Wah Diddy" by local Boston band Barry and the Remains, to the final shout-out of the night, an encore of the Standells' "Dirty Water" (with J. Geils Band front man Peter Wolf guesting on vocals), Springsteen and crew gave more than just music, they gave back.

Playing around with an unorthodox setlist by tour standards, the crowd was delighted and surprised by such rarely invoked numbers as "Be True," "Janey, Don't You Lose Heart," "Because the Night," "Across the Border," and "Seven Nights to Rock," coaxed to life with chants of, "Is there anyone alive in Fenway Park?" And on Saturday night, under cloudless skies shining with a brilliant moon, in a building that is indeed haunted, we were most definitely alive. —Kristen Merrill

RACING IN THE STREET:

After the show, Bruce was leaning out the window of his SUV, yelling at fans and smiling like crazy as it tore down Landsdowne Street. Unless you're from Boston, it's hard to explain what this meant to people—it was a huge deal. Fenway hadn't had a rock show ever, and the former owners were very, very conservative. To have Bruce in front of the Green Monster was really special for a lot of us. Boston has been a good Bruce city for years and years, but this cemented his place alongside Ted Williams, Larry Bird, the Kennedys and Bobby Orr as an icon. —Peter Abraham

SEPTEMBER 7 FENWAY PARK BOSTON, MA

SETLIST:

Take Me Out to the Ballgame/Diddy Wah Diddy/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Adam Raised a Cain/Something in the Night/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Spirit in the Night/For You/Because the Night/She's the One/Badlands/Mary's Place/Frankie/Jungleland/Into the Fire/Thunder Road/Further On (Up the Road)/Glory Days/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/Dirty Water

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "For You" and a couple times through "Frankie."

NOTES: "It's great to be back at Fenway another night. We had a hell of a time last night. We'll do it again and then some." The "do it again" includes Danny's organ on "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," a full-band "Born in the U.S.A.," and the two Boston specials, "Diddy Wah Diddy" and "Dirty Water" with Peter Wolf. As for "and then some": The tour debut of "Frankie," by request, is its second performance since 1976; other rarities include "Further On (Up the Road)" and a "Spirit in the Night"/"For You" double play.

This show, regarded as one of the best of the



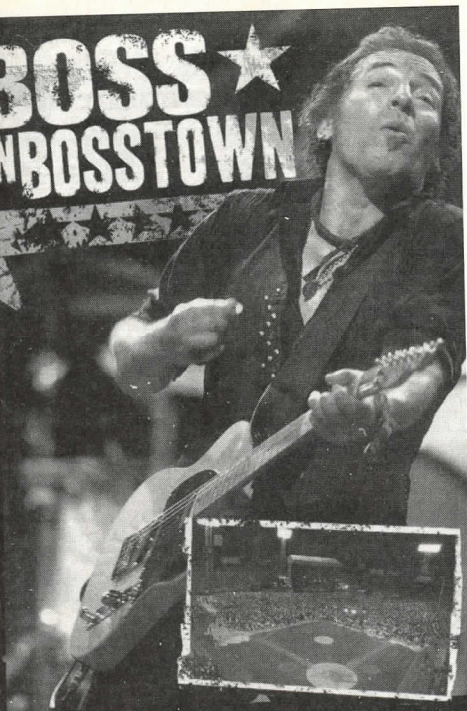
MARY CULMAN PHOTO



ROCCO COWELLO PHOTO

THE BOSS ★
IN BOSSTOWN

NESN
MINUTE
HOLIDAY
SPECIAL



**THE MAKING-OF-THE-CONCERT
THAT MADE THE SUMMER!**
FEATURING BEHIND-THE-SCENES AND PERFORMANCE FOOTAGE

**PREMIERES
TOMORROW NIGHT AT 8PM
ENCORE PRESENTATION AT 10PM**

NESN

tour, was filmed and considered for home-video release; for now, partial footage is included on the *Live in Barcelona* DVD, and more from both nights appeared on the New England Sports Network's making-of special, "The Boss in Bosstown," which debuted on November 27.

PRESS: "THE BOSS FINISHES FENWAY STAND IN STYLE." Joan Anderman in the *Boston Globe*: Bruce Springsteen's history-making concert at Fenway Park [on September 6] spawned the predictable spate of puns about rock 'n' roll home runs and musical grand slams. The Boss's second Fenway show—for another sold-out crowd of 35,000—left this second-shift scribe scrambling for new superlatives to describe what happens when a legendary musician, a beloved ballpark, and the cosmic-grade fandom attached to both collide.

Fenway groundskeeper David Mellor set the tone by leaving a surprise message on the infield grass this morning: B-R-U-C-E mowed in perfect Red Sox font and three musical notes between the bases.... But it was a rip-roaring read on "Glory Days," Springsteen's paean to baseball, that brought it all together midway through an exuberant and often incandescent set. Springsteen changed roughly half the set list from Saturday's show.... several fans who attended both nights described [Sunday's] as the far better of the two....

"We want to thank all you folks in the neighborhood for letting us come and make all this

racket. I know you can hear me!" Springsteen shouted toward the end of the evening. And then he offered up a token of his appreciation: "My City of Ruins," "Born in the U.S.A.," "Ros-alita," "Dancing in the Dark," and "Dirty Water."

We're guessing no one complained.

I'LL BE ON THAT HILL: The engineers who designed Springsteen's sound system for the Fenway concerts claimed that those of us without tickets would hear very little from outside the ballpark, even from Yawkey Way. Engineering be damned, my husband and I listened to Springsteen's Sunday evening show from our home up on a hill in Jamaica Plain.

At first I refused to believe the sound could travel two miles, and I insisted that a neighbor was playing a tape of Saturday's show very, very loudly. It was definitely live music—we could hear lyrics and sax solos without straining our ears, and my husband pointed out that the sound was emanating from a source much larger than a home audio system, and was more likely generated by several walls of giant speakers.

When the E Street Band broke into "Thunder Road," I (happily) conceded. We listened to the rest of the concert in our bedroom, turning out the lights with the opening to "Dirty Water," a familiar sign that the night was about to come to an end at Fenway Park.

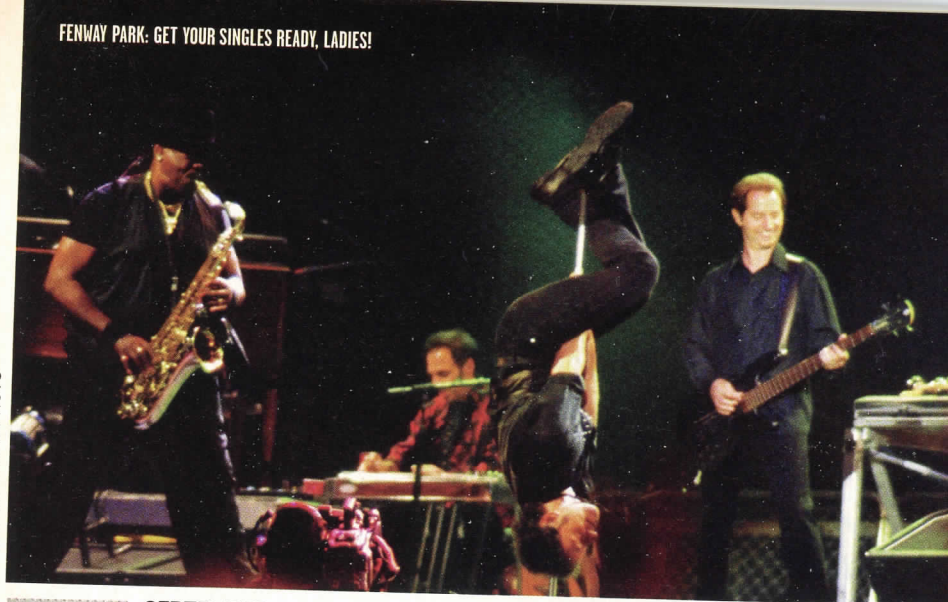
—Pamela Yosca

ROCCO COVIELLO PHOTO



FENWAY'S GREEN MONSTER MEETS ITS MATCH

ROCCO COVIELLO PHOTO



SEPTEMBER 10 SKYDOME TORONTO, ON

SETLIST: My Ride's Here/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/Trapped/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Darlington County/Because the Night/She's the One/Badlands/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Jungleland/Into the Fire/No Surrender/Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

NOTES: A Warren Zevon tribute, "My Ride's Here," opens the first show since the songwriter's death was made public. "Land of Hope and Dreams" returns to the set, as does "Countin' on a Miracle" for the first time since May. "Jungleland" is played by request.

UNDERNEATH THE STARRY SKY: It was appropriate that this show took place under a full moon—it was a strange one. It was a pleasant surprise to see the SkyDome's roof open ["That will keep us from having to blow it off," said Bruce] on a warm September evening, which definitely improved the sound quality and created more of a backyard barbecue-like party atmosphere. The moving Warren Zevon cover/tribute to open was worth the price of admission by itself, as were the other covers and classics like "Jungleland," "Because the Night" and of course, "Rosalita." But compared to the other four shows I've seen this tour, this one suffered from some awkward moments. "Countin' on a Miracle" wiped out the energy in the crowd and on stage—things had been soaring high up until that point, when the whole show seemed to hit the ground hard. It never quite fully recovered, partially due to questionable song selection ("No Surrender" and "Bobby Jean" did nothing to lift anyone's spirits) and less than the usual passion on stage. However, "Ramrod" (thanks to the extended howling at the moon by the band and crowd) and "Seven Nights to Rock" got things back to a high level. By the time "Dancing in the Dark" wound down, the crowd was energized again and the band, especially Bruce, knew it. The self-proclaimed "rock and roll exorcism" had successfully banished its self-created demons. —Jay Algar

SEPTEMBER 13 FEDEX FIELD LANDOVER, MD

SETLIST: I Walk the Line/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Promised Land/The Fuse/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/No Surrender/Human Touch/She's the One/Badlands/Mary's Place/Paradise/Jungleland/Into the Fire//Pink Cadillac/Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Living Proof" and "Human Touch."

STARTER: "Another Saturday Night."

NOTES: The late Johnny Cash's signature "I Walk the Line" has Bruce on acoustic, with Soozie featured on fiddle. The first "Human Touch" of 2003, the tour premiere of "Pink Cadillac," and the tour-proper debut of "Paradise," dedicated to the family of Captain Robert Dolan. Dolan was one of the highest ranking officers killed at the Pentagon on 9/11; his family attended this show as Springsteen's guests.

THE VIRGINIA HILLS: We got ten songs from *The Rising*, and each one was played with an intensity that was amazing. "The Fuse" is great in concert; "You're Missing" has gone missing recently, but I'm glad it was back in. This was, after all, the first show after 9/11, and it was in the nation's capital. This obviously meant something to Bruce, and I think it did to the majority of the crowd as well.

A complete shocker was the first "Paradise" of the tour proper. And after the shock wore off, I settled in to give it a good listen. Bruce simply played it too fast. The crowd was great—quiet, respectful—Bruce had 'em. There was a predictable cheer at the "Virginia hills have gone to brown" line, but other than that, the crowd was great. But he played it so quickly that the words and the meaning got lost. I just wish he has sung the song as nicely as he had dedicated it. Still, it was something to get this one.

First encore, Bruce comes out and says they haven't played this song in 20 years. Then he, Steve, and Nils are trying to figure out the guitar parts. Obviously not rehearsed—it's "Pink Cadillac." Eventually, Nils seemed to have the

WARREN ZEVON: THE MAN & THE MYTH

Shortly after Springsteen paid tribute to Warren Zevon in Toronto with "My Ride's Here," Backstreets spoke with longtime Stone Pony DJ Lee Mrowicki about his memories of Zevon playing the House that Bruce Built in Asbury Park.

I MET WARREN ZEVON WHEN Bruce first took him to the Pony to see the Jukes, and I think "When Johnny Strikes Up the Band" is the result of that visit. And then "Janey Needs a Shooter" [which Zevon and Springsteen co-wrote] was the result of a writing session at Bruce's. Warren was a little weird, especially when he played the first two times at the club. The first time, I went into the dressing room and introduced myself as I normally would, asking if there was a special intro or if the artist wanted some special music before the show. So Warren said he'd write something and come up and see me in the DJ booth. He wanted some old blues prior to the show, and he gave me a piece of paper with the intro: "Warren Zevon... the man and the myth."

The next time he played, he gave me a cassette to play prior to his show, and he wanted "Warren Zevon: piano-fighter!" as the intro. The music he wanted me to play was old, obscure Sinatra. Now, I have an affection for Ol' Blue Eyes like anyone else from Jersey, but that night the crowd—used to hearing me play the normal Bruce/Jukes, etc. stuff before a "Bruce-related" artist—was getting a little on edge. So he comes up to me in the middle of my set and I say to him, "Warren, you're gonna get me lynched! This crowd is actually getting angry"—referring to the few bold customers who were asking, "Why are you playing this shit?"

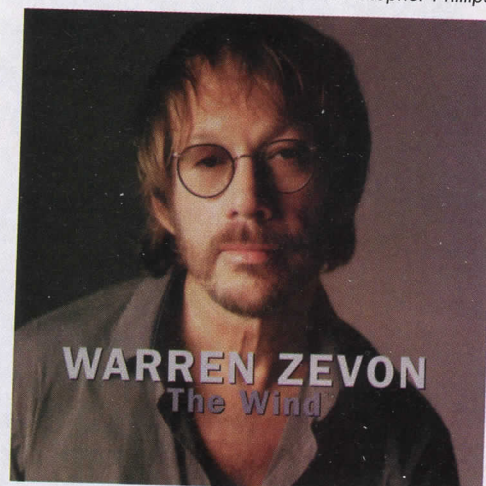
And he says, in his low monotone voice: "That's the point."

He wanted them on edge. And while I was talking to him I had to stoop down to look for a CD under the table, and I noticed a bulge on Warren's ankle. He was packing that night. So I said, "Do you really think you're gonna need that?" And he said, "Well, I never know."

Of course, those were Warren's drinking days....

The last time he played, of course, we laughed about the times before... and he played a wonderful, inspired, and mesmerizing show.

—Lee Mrowicki, as told to Christopher Phillips



Springsteen guests on Zevon's final album, *The Wind*, playing on "Disorder in the House" and "Prison Grove."

part down and Bruce told him to "take it." This was a really fun song—Bruce and the band had a lot of fun with it, and the crowd loved it. Then came the only clunker for me: "Bobby Jean." I wish this one would be retired.

"Ramrod" had Bruce howling at the moon, which had made an appearance over the stadium. While Clarence was taking his solo, Bruce was calling out: "Big Man on the move! Big Man gonna throw Dick Cheney out of office!" Bruce's first political comment of the night had come during "Mary's Place"; introducing Clarence he said the President should be impeached and that Clarence should be elected "to get us out of this mess!" Some people don't like the political comments, but Bruce can express his feelings just like we all do. We might not all agree with everything he says, but he has the right to say them. And why not in a stadium full of people? Not appropriate? Bah. When is it? Politics is all around us. We have it in our workplace, so why can't Bruce?

His public service announcement was tasteful and appropriate, especially in the nation's capital. One funny thing he did interject: when saying how they welcome people of all political views, he paused and said, "Well, maybe with the exception of Dick Cheney." I don't know for sure if Bruce is a Democrat or not (although I suspect he is), but there is little doubt he doesn't like the current administration. The version of "Born in the U.S.A." that followed literally had the stadium shaking. I would never have believed it if I hadn't been there, but the drums and bass were making the concrete shake. I, for one, am also happy to have this song in place of "Land of Hope and Dreams." The latter is a fine song, but I'm glad Bruce is mixing it up a little. And I never had a doubt that he would play "Born in the U.S.A." here. It's a very powerful song. And although, like many people, I wouldn't want to see this one played every night, I'm glad it was tonight.

—Chris Allen

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. I Walk | 13. Mary's |
| 2. Rising | 14. 41 Shots |
| 3. Lonesome | 15. Backstreets |
| 4. No Surrender | 16. Into the Fire |
| 5. Darkness | 17. Cadillac Ranch |
| 6. Empty Sky | 18. Glory Days |
| 7. Missing | 19. Born |
| 8. Sunny | 20. ? |
| 9. Darling | 21. Candy's Room |
| 10. Living Proof | 22. Land |
| 11. She's the One | 23. Rock |
| 12. Bad | 24. Dancing |

Other audibles: "Candy's Room" (in place of "No Surrender"), "Hungry Heart," "Brilliant Disguise," and "Born in the U.S.A." (in place of "Land of Hope and Dreams"). In the crowd: Kristi Yamaguchi.

AM I BUGGIN' YA? Just slightly shorter than the DC show, but with one song more, the Chapel Hill gig showed that it doesn't take a full stadium to get Bruce in fine form. (Even in this small stadium, the upper tier was empty, with the exception of those sitting high up in the VIP booths). From the beginning I could see various mosquitos and bugs flying around him, which would be a source of his annoyance and the audience's amusement for much of the show. "Man, I thought they were bad in Jersey!" he said, chuckling, as he picked up one particularly large specimen [a cicada] from the base of his mic stand: "What the hell is that? The school mascot?" Throughout "Empty Sky," he and Patti were continuously brushing off bugs from their faces and arms, and I wondered if they would drop "You're Missing," but we got both songs in fine, if slightly bug-distracted, renditions.

"Darlington County" was fun as always, but the next song was the first indication that we were in for a terrific setlist. "Living Proof" hasn't been played in ten years and never before with the E Street Band. They had sound-checked the song extensively in D.C. the night before, and unlike "Pink Cadillac," it sounded full and rehearsed from the beginning. It sounded much like it did with the '92-'93 band, but Nils took one of his distinctive solos towards the end, which gave it a sort of modern E Street Band sound.

"Cadillac Ranch" made the first encore for me (as on "Darlington" or "Working on the Highway," Soozie brings something new to the song at the end), but it would be the second encore that really brought the house down. Bruce emerged with an electric guitar—wow, no "My City of Ruins" to start? He introduced the next song as a request, pulling "Brilliant Disguise" out of nowhere, and I was floored. The second encore was the last place I would have expected it to pop up. But no com-

plaints—it sounded so damn tight, it's hard to imagine that it was a tour premiere.

A high-energy "Dancing in the Dark" was the most memorable version of the song I am ever likely to see, thanks to a young female fan who brandished a sign reading "Jon Landau" with an arrow pointing at her. She was brought up onstage and given a guitar, proceeding to do an imitation of Landau—which then coalesced into a Wayne's-World-worthy air guitar (with a little Hendrix thrown in) as she followed Bruce around the stage, to everybody's amazement. The band looked on in disbelief, the crowd thought it was brilliant, and Bruce just about kept up with her, bringing her over to the mike to sing the final "Hey Baby!" lines with him. I hoped that Bruce might be inspired to do one more song, but if he had been, he would have been very hard pressed to top what we had just seen. —Magnus Lauglo

SEPTEMBER 16 RENTSCHLER FIELD EAST HARTFORD, CT

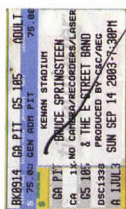
SETLIST: The Ghost of Tom Joad/No Surrender/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Leap of Faith/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Spirit in the Night/Human Touch/She's the One/Badlands/Mary's Place/American Skin (41 Shots)/Backstreets/Into the Fire/The Promised Land/Bobby Jean/Ramrod/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/Let's Be Friends (Skin to Skin)/My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Let's Be Friends," "Lucky Town," and "Leap of Faith."

NOTES: With the live premiere of "Let's Be Friends," every song from *The Rising* has now been performed on this tour. Also the tour debuts of "The Ghost of Tom Joad" and "Leap of Faith," Bruce's first performance of the latter since 1993 and its E Street premiere.

NO JACKET REQUIRED: I knew the show was going to smoke when Bruce came out in a blue T-shirt and jeans. I know, sounds weird, but I've always loved the '85 model Springsteen where it's just jeans and a T-shirt. No vest. No blazer. When I saw Bruce come on stage alone with the acoustic, I thought he was going to continue with the recent performances of "I Walk the Line." Instead we were treated to "The Ghost of Tom Joad," which sounded fantastic. Same version as the *Joad* tour, and, in my opinion, better than the treatment the song received on the Reunion tour. When the band kicked into "No Surrender" right after that, I really lost it—it was the most powerful version of that song I've heard yet.

"Leap of Faith" was a real stunner. I never thought I'd get to hear this song again after the 1992-'93 tour. It was just magic, and the E Streeters really nailed this one. Up to this point there were already enough surprises for an entire concert. But of course, you get greedy... and then "Human Touch" was killer, Bruce's solo at the end was unbelievable. Same with "She's the One"—I loved the harmonica outro he was doing earlier in the tour, but he's completely dropped it now for a new crazy-ass guitar solo.



SEPTEMBER 14 KENAN STADIUM CHAPEL HILL, NC

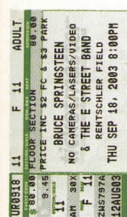
SETLIST: I Walk the Line/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Candy's Room/Darkness on the Edge of Town/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Darlington

County/Living Proof/She's the One/Badlands/Mary's Place/American Skin (41 Shots)/Jungleland/Into the Fire/Cadillac Ranch/Hungry Heart/Glory Days/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/Brilliant Disguise/My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

NOTES: No beer sales at this college football stadium, hosting its first major concert since 1983 (when Todd Rundgren, U2, and Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five played the Carolina Concert for the Children). The E Street Band premiere of "Living Proof," Bruce's first performance of the song since 1994. The tour premiere of "Brilliant Disguise," by request. "Backstreets" is on the setlist but not played; "Jungleland" replaces it, and is nailed by Clarence "Big Man on Campus" Clemons.

"Let's Be Friends" was rough, gotta be honest about it. It still was exciting because it was a world premiere. In terms of the performance, though, let's just say they need to keep sound-checking this one. "Born in the U.S.A." was very fiery. I enjoyed it, despite the PSA. Stick to the tunes, Bruce. I know I'm in the minority in the Bruce community, but it just makes me uncomfortable when he gets on his soap box. I don't know.... maybe it's just me.

This tour has had me scratching my head more than a few times, and last night's show still had a few lulls. But the difference between the performance and intensity now vs. earlier in the tour is like night and day. I think Bruce and the band realize the finish line is near... and they are bringing this tour to a close in style. —John Hunt



SEPTEMBER 18 RENTSCHLER FIELD EAST HARTFORD, CT

SETLIST: Souls of the Departed/
Night/The Rising/Lonesome
Day/Leap of Faith/Empty Sky/
Factory/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/
The Promised Land/Living Proof/
Because the Night/Badlands/Out in the Street/
Mary's Place/Incident on 57th Street/Thunder
Road/Into the Fire//Janey, Don't You Lose
Heart/I'm Goin' Down/Glory Days/Born to
Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/
Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in
the Dark

NOTES: With Hurricane Isabel threatening, this is a windy, but still rain-free, show. The tour premiere of "Souls of the Departed" is joined by "Leap of Faith" and "Living Proof" for a rare triple-shot from *Lucky Town*. Hartford night two also brings the tour premiere of "Factory" and the second tour performance of "I'm Goin' Down"—both audibles—and the first solo-piano "Incident" since May. On the setlist but not played: "The River" and "Brilliant Disguise."

PRESS: Andre Bowser in the *Courant*: Police

received only a dozen or so complaints about the volume of the Bruce Springsteen concert Thursday at Rentschler Field. One was from someone who couldn't hear it, police said.

Two days after the stadium's first outdoor concert—also Springsteen—generated more than 100 calls complaining about noise, sound engineers for the promoter seemed to have the situation under control, officials said.... As of 11 p.m., police said the complaints were few and far between.

"We just got a call from a guy on Winding Lane complaining that he couldn't hear the concert," Officer Hugo Benettieri, East Hartford police spokesman, said about two hours into the concert.

"He said that he wanted them to turn it up,"...

"SPRINGSTEEN ELECTRIFIES A CHARGED-UP CROWD." Eric R. Danton in the *Courant*: The energy level at Rentschler Field Thursday was high even before Bruce Springsteen took the stage. It was as if an electrical current crackled through the crowd, creating a low roar that built and sparked into unquenchable flames when the Boss and his band took the stage and opened with "Souls of the Departed."

It was the second of Springsteen's two shows at the football stadium in East Hartford, and it was better in every respect than the first performance Tuesday. Maybe it stemmed from the distant risk of a hurricane, but the crowd was more lively, and Springsteen and his E Street Band fed off the energy....

"Here's one we haven't played on this tour," Springsteen said by way of introduction for "Factory," which included mournful steel guitar fills from Nils Lofgren.... Springsteen sat down at the piano for a solo version of "Incident on 57th Street," which melted into an overwhelming, emotional version of "Thunder Road." Clarence Clemons' huge saxophone solo cut through the night, carrying the sighs and tears of a million memories while the band vamped behind him....

I SAW COURTNEY COX'S FUTURE... AND HER NAME IS JON LANDAU

I KINDA LIKED MY TIME on stage in Indianapolis (12/17/03) as Courtney Cox during "Dancing in the Dark," and I never thought lightning would strike twice. But for Chapel Hill's "Dancing in the Dark"—a song Jon Landau occasionally comes out to play guitar on—I decided to try another approach. I threw on a big shirt, borrowed some glasses, and held up a sign that read "Jon Landau" with an arrow pointing to my head. The front row of the pit graciously let me step up for the band to see me. I was in front of Patti, who noticed me first, and she leaned back to say something off stage. Next thing I knew, Landau looked out from backstage—we saw each other and laughed. Patti showed Stevie, as I was doing my best chin-rub and head-nod, mimicking Jon. Stevie pointed me to Bruce and the rest of the band. Totally satisfied that the band got my joke I put the sign down to enjoy the rest of the show.

Then Bruce signaled for me to get on stage.

I heaved myself over the rail—put a leg up, security lifted me the rest of the way—this maneuvering was anything but graceful. I did a dead sprint up the stairs to the stage, and bang: E Street, Kenan Stadium, and me. I kept up with the chin-rub/head-nod thing, and then Stevie put his guitar on me. When I conceived this idea I thought that if I were to get on stage, they might give me a guitar—and I don't know how to play guitar. But what I lack in guitar skill I made up in exaggerated arm movements. I guess I just kinda ditched the Landau impression and went with some of my Bruce moves (I left out spitting water on Nils and Clarence and announcing it was time for an "ass rising.") I had a massive air guitar solo while Bruce and Clarence jammed. Bruce dragged me from the back of my shirt up to the mic. He said "Are you ready?" I said "yeah," he goes "1-2-3-4" (my very own count off!), and we both leaned in for "Heeey Baby!" And we smacked foreheads. I danced away, handed Steve his guitar (he gave me a pick), hugged Patti, and jumped back to tell Landau if he ever needed a stunt double, let me know.

—Emily Dorezas



MARTHA REEVES: DANCING IN THE E STREET

IT WAS ONLY IN THE upper 80s when Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band hit Detroit's Comerica Park, two days before Bruce's 54th birthday, but you could feel a heat wave coming on. That's because legendary Detroit R&B singer Martha Reeves, of Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, was in the house. "I came just to wish Bruce a happy birthday," Reeves told *Backstreets*. "But the way it ended up, with me going onstage with him and all, it felt more like a birthday present for me."

Reeves came to the Springsteen show with her friend Kim Farinacci, a singer/songwriter who has played with Bobby Bandiera and Joe Grushecky. Farinacci brought Reeves backstage before the show, with a plan to have the two of them sing "Happy Birthday" to Bruce. "He seemed really happy to see me again," recalled Reeves, who had previously met Springsteen at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame opening in Cleveland. "He hugged me and seemed lost for words."

After Farinacci and Reeves had passed on birthday greetings to Bruce, Patti Scialfa invited them into her dressing room. "She was delighted to see me, too," Reeves said. "When you meet the Boss, meeting his wife is like meeting part of him. Before I do shows, I don't like to meet people, but Patti couldn't have been more open. She had us come in and sit down while her dressmaker and hairdresser worked on her."

Reeves and Farinacci accompanied the band as they traveled to the stage in golf carts, and she watched them pray together before climbing onstage. It was at that moment, just as Springsteen was set to appear onstage, that he turned to Reeves and said, "How about singing a little of 'Heat Wave' with me tonight?" Reeves quickly agreed and waited backstage for her moment. "It was amazing watching him from backstage," she said. "It was a fabulous show, and he did all these acrobatics. When he stopped singing and let the audience sing 'Waitin' on Sunny Day,' it was like a beautiful magic that I had never experienced before."

When the first encore came it was Reeves' moment as she and Farinacci joined the E Streeters for "Heat Wave." "They rocked my song," she said of the arrangement. "I pay my band and I rehearse them, but they don't do it the way Bruce's band did. Bruce even sang all the little parts in the middle. Max is a wonderful drummer and knew the tempo and how to hold it. And Stevie played a wonderful solo."

Reeves was recently inducted into the Vocal Group Hall of Fame. She says that induction, and playing with Bruce, made this summer special. "It sounded as if we had rehearsed, but we hadn't," she noted. "It was a heart lift for me, as opposed to a face lift. He even did a little bit of 'Dancing in the Street' before one song. It was quite an honor for me, and it was the highlight of the summer in Detroit."

—Charles R. Cross

SEPTEMBER 20 DARIEN LAKE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER BUFFALO, NY

SETLIST: Tunnel of Love/Brilliant Disguise/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/Empty Sky/Mansion on the Hill/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Leap of Faith/Because the Night/Badlands/No Surrender/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/County Fair/Into the Fire/Bobby Jean//Janey, Don't You Lose Heart/Glory Days/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Tunnel of Love" and "Light of Day."

NOTES: Relocated (after Clear Channel "misjudged the market in the Buffalo area") from Ralph J. Wilson Stadium to the smallest venue of the summer leg, a 20,000-plus-capacity amphitheater at Six Flags Darien Lake. The amusement park setting is reflected in the tour premieres of "Tunnel of Love" (last performed in 1988) and "County Fair," the latter an early-'80s outtake never before performed live. "Mansion on the Hill" is also a tour premiere. Buffalo native Willie Nile joined in on guitar for "Glory Days." On the setlist but not played: "Jungleland," replaced by "County Fair"; and "Ramrod," replaced by "Janey."

NOT A DARK RIDE: You know it's going to be a good night when Bruce walks on to an outdoor stage during a beautiful late summer evening, points at the Ferris wheel beside the theater and comments about feeling right at home. You know it's going to be a *great* night when that statement is immediately followed by the first performance in almost 15 years of "Tunnel of Love," followed by the equally great "Brilliant Disguise." Immediately all was forgiven for the venue change and messy ticket exchanges that seemed to weed out all but the most loyal fans. This was the most pumped crowd I saw on the *Rising* tour, and it did not go unnoticed on stage.

The highlight of the night—and possibly the tour, for me—was "County Fair." What made it extra special was the fact it was so completely spontaneous and unrehearsed that we got to see him teach it to Soozie and Danny [on accordion] on stage in front of us. There could not have been a more perfect song selection for a show at an amusement park. Seeing Willie Nile come out and play on "Glory Days" was another highlight. It was sad to hear Bruce talk before "My City of Ruins" about how there were only six nights left to rock on the tour—he seemed genuinely disappointed that the tour was coming to an end. This was my sixth and final show of the *Rising* tour, and I think it was the best of the bunch—despite hearing "Countin' on a Miracle" for the fifth time out of six shows! —Jay Algar

SEPTEMBER 21 COMERICA PARK DETROIT, MI

SETLIST: Souls of the Departed/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/The Promised Land/Local Hero/Because the Night/Badlands/No Surrender/Mary's Place/Jungleland/Into the Fire/My Beautiful Reward/Bobby Jean/Heat Wave/Glory Days/I'm Goin' Down/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock//My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Local Hero."

NOTES: Two more *Lucky Town* songs have their E Street premieres, with Bruce's first performances of "Local Hero" and "My Beautiful Reward" since 1993. Martha Reeves, represented in spirit with a snippet of "Dancing in the Street" in "Mary's Place," was also there in the flesh, taking the stage with vocalist Kim Farinacci for the E Street premiere of "Heat Wave." Two days before Springsteen's 54th birthday, Clarence and Steve help lead the crowd in singing "Happy Birthday to Bruce" after "Dancing in the Dark." In the crowd: Bob Seger.

PRESS: "BOSS RULES DETROIT." Gary Graff in the *Oakland Press*: A low, guttural roar washed over Comerica Park on Sunday night, but it wasn't the boos heard so often there this summer at Detroit

Tigers games—or heard that afternoon during the Lions' loss at nearby Ford Field.

Instead it was the joyous bellow of "Bruuuuuuuuuuuuuuu!" traditionally voiced by fans of Bruce Springsteen, who brought his E Street Band to town Sunday night and brought a winner to a stadium district that's been bereft of them in 2003. Or as Springsteen put it—noting the Tigers' dismal season—it was a rock 'n' roll exorcism designed to "chase all the evil spirits out of here."

With the New Jersey rocker's birthday two days away, Springsteen and company were in a celebratory mood, keeping the 27,000 at Comerica dancing and clapping throughout most of the extra innings-length performance....

At the start of "Mary's Place," the evening's drawn-out, introduce-the-band piece, Springsteen—as he did during his August 2002 show at The Palace of Auburn Hills—tossed in a bit of Martha & the Vandellas' "Dancing in the Street," accenting the passage "all we need is music/sweet, sweet music" and repeatedly asking the audience, "Are you ready?"

The crowd was, in fact, more than ready. The sports teams spent Sunday losing, but thanks to Springsteen and the E Streeters, the music fans registered an unconditional victory.

LUCKY (MO)TOWN: What a difference a hundred shows makes. From show number five to show number 115, the two Detroit shows were polar





MARGARET MISH PHOTO

opposites. Stadiums suck, but somehow Bruce managed to make me forget about the vastness of the ballpark and made me concentrate on the show and songs. Those *Lucky Town* songs elevated the show to another level and fit quite well with the *Rising* material. "Souls of the Departed" should have been in the set a year ago, but it now has even more relevance today than it did back in 1992. —Tony Kuzminski

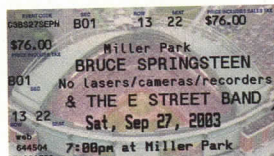
SEPTEMBER 25 INVESCO FIELD AT MILE HIGH DENVER, CO

SETLIST: Get Out of Denver/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Leap of Faith/Night/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Darlington County/Tunnel of Love/Brilliant Disguise/Because the Night/Badlands/No Surrender/Out in the Street/Mary's Place/Countin' on a Miracle/Across the Border/Into the Fire/The Promised Land/Kitty's Back/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Get Out of Denver," "Tunnel of Love," and "Walk Like a Man."

NOTES: Mile-high and half-full, but a packed setlist for Invesco Field: 27 songs in all, and 20 in the main set. Denver gets a namecheck and a tour premiere right out of the gate as Bob Seger's "Get Out of Denver" starts the show. Like "Seven Nights to Rock," Springsteen had covered the song at the RCDS Benefits at the Stone Pony, but this is the E Street Band debut. A very welcome return appearance of the '87

double-shot "Tunnel of Love" and "Brilliant Disguise"—and speaking of welcome returns, Kitty comes back down the alley for the first encore. Other highlights: "Leap of Faith," "Night," "Because the Night," and "Across the Border." The *Rising* producer Brendan O'Brien plays guitar on "Rosalita."



SEPTEMBER 27 MILLER PARK MILWAUKEE, WI

SETLIST: Candy's Room/The Rising/Lonesome

Day/My Love Will Not Let You Down/Brilliant Disguise/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Beer Barrel Polka/Two Hearts/Who'll Stop the Rain/The Fuse/Because the Night/Badlands/She's the One/Mary's Place/Across the Border/Jungleland/Into the Fire/Bobby Jean/Kitty's Back/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/Cadillac Ranch

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Man's Job" and "One Step Up."

NOTES: Once again, Bruce asks the Milwaukee crowd, "Are you loose?" In the home of the Brewers, "Beer Barrel Polka" in the key of C spotlights Danny on accordion. "The Fuse" and "Bobby Jean" are audibles, as is "Across the Border," in place of the setlisted "Countin' on a Miracle." In the crowd: Bobby Muller (a likely reason for tonight's "Who'll Stop the Rain").

ROLL OUT THE BARREL: The highlight in Brew

Town had to be the world premiere of the E Street Band's rendition of the "Beer Barrel Polka"—which clearly was an audible, judging by the flabbergasted look on Danny's face as he repeated the words back to Bruce: "Beer Barrel Polka"?! After the song, Bruce said that the band now has something to fall back on—working wedding gigs.

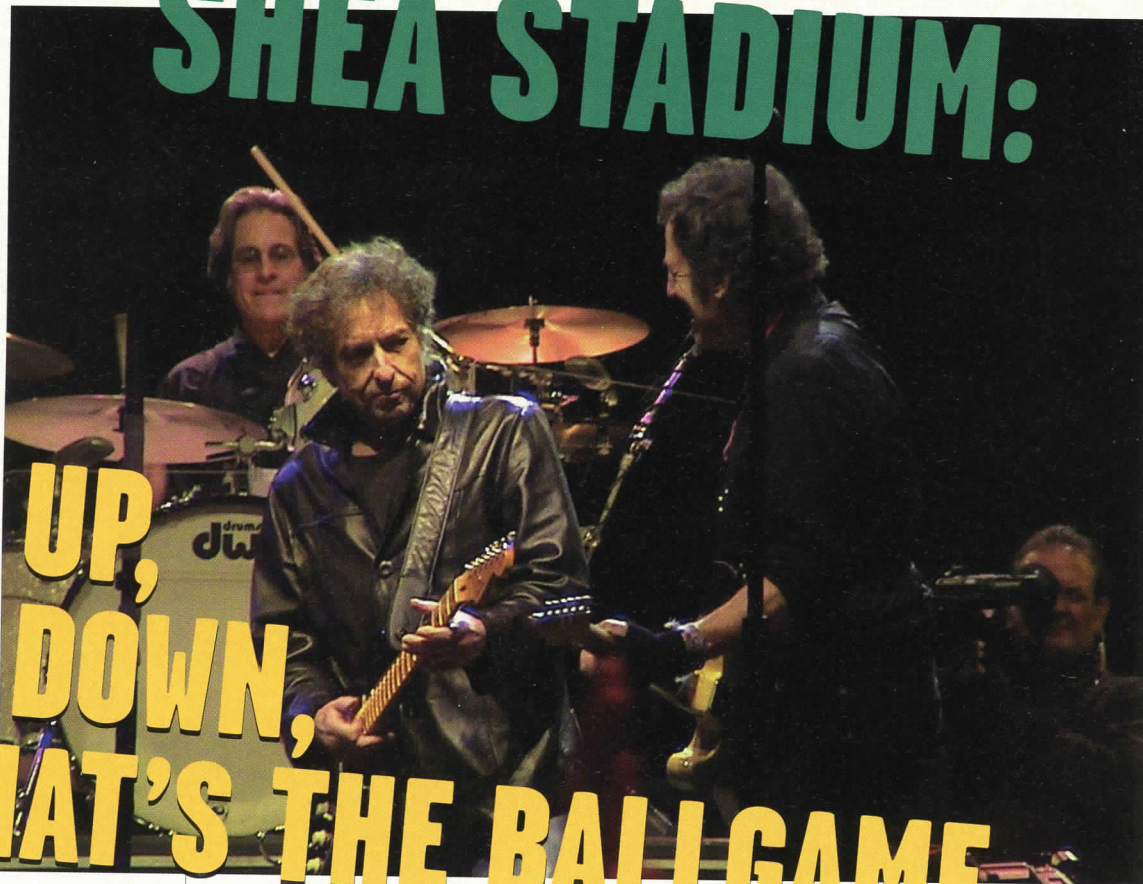
But even for the non-polka fans, what a setlist: "Candy's Room" as the opener, "Kitty's Back," a fabulous "Two Hearts" with Steve.... Bruce dedicated a beautiful "Across the Border" to the freedom riders who were on their way to Washington to lobby for immigrants' rights.

Clarence absolutely nailed "Jungleland," which opened with a haunting Soozie violin solo. Bruce's guitar on "Because the Night" seemed to be about ready to burst into flames, and this was a great extended rock-jazz-jam version of "Kitty."

The big question all day had been whether the stadium's retractable roof would be open on a night with temperatures around 50 and clouds threatening rain. At the soundcheck, it was opened and closed a few times—reportedly much to Bruce's amusement—but when the fans came in, it was closed.

It didn't matter: a bonus "Cadillac Ranch" as a ninth encore song on this "Wisconsin night," featuring a cheesehead-wearing Roy, just about blew the roof off anyway. Bruce looked like he wanted to keep going, but when Clarence took his arm, it was time to go. "We'll be seein' ya, Milwaukee!" Bruce said, closing out the on-the-road portion of the *Rising* tour. —Becky Byers

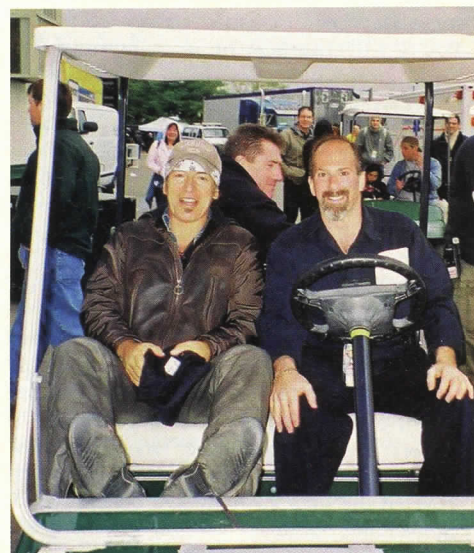
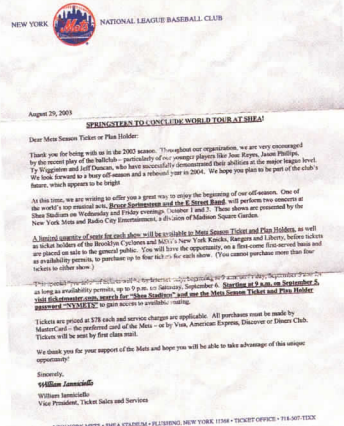
SHEA STADIUM:

THREE UP,
THREE DOWN,
AND THAT'S THE BALLGAME

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE E Street Band concluded their 2002-2003 world tour by playing 33 shows in football and baseball stadiums across the United States. Actually, only 32 of those shows were held in stadiums—the Buffalo, NY, show was moved to a smaller venue due to disappointing ticket sales. That problem was not unique to Buffalo, but no other venue relocations were made. The inability to fill some of the stadiums on this tour is not surprising given the haphazard method of booking and scheduling that seemed to occur. And “tour” might not even be the best word to describe what this series of shows actually was. Twenty-four of the 33 shows took place in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Connecticut. If there was any doubt about where the majority of the Springsteen fan base could be found in the U.S., there shouldn’t be after this summer. The nine shows outside the northeastern part of the country seemed to be added as an afterthought. They certainly couldn’t have planned to play in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Chicago in between Philadelphia and the Meadowlands for the convenience of the travel.

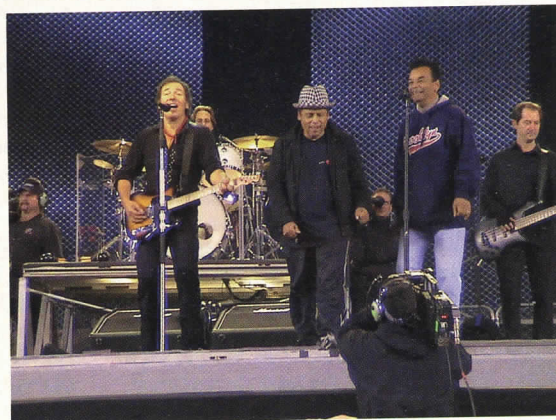
Rumors of Yankee Stadium dates in New York had been floating around for several weeks leading up to the New Jersey shows at Giants Stadium, but apparently the Yankees refused to allow the use of their stadium, fearing that the field might be damaged for the playoffs. The last-place New York Mets, having no such concerns, happily granted the use of Shea Stadium for what would turn out to be the last three shows of the *Rising* tour. Initially, shows were announced for October 1 and 3. A letter was sent to Mets season ticket holders offering an opportunity to purchase tickets prior to the public sale. Similar pre-sales had been arranged for season ticket holders of the teams that played in some of the other stadiums on the tour. A third show on October 4 was added later, but there was no presale for that show.

The Giants Stadium shows had been aggressively advertised as the “last area shows” of the *Rising* tour. Shea Stadium is located about 20 miles from Giants Stadium, and the heart of New York City is right in between the two facilities. Put in plain language, this is false advertising. Whatever justification is applied, the fact remains that five separate dates in the



CHRISTINE COURSON PHOTO

BY ROBERT S. BADER



OCTOBER 4, THE LAST DANCE AT SHEA. Top: there's no "i" in "team"... but there is an "E." Above left: Brendan O'Brien and Don Jenner join the Redheaded Women. Above right: with Garland Jeffreys and Gary U.S. Bonds on stage, it ain't Boss Time, it's Quarter to Three.

New York/New Jersey area were advertised and promoted as the final area show at one time or another. A person could have purchased tickets for the shows on July 18, July 27 and August 31 at Giants Stadium, as well as for October 3 and October 4 at Shea Stadium, believing they were buying tickets for the last area show of the *Rising* tour. Adding additional shows due to excessive demand is to be expected, but what could possibly be defined as "excessive demand" after ten shows at Giants Stadium? Thousands of unsold Shea Stadium tickets illustrated that point.

If Giants Stadium was a less-than-ideal venue, Shea promised to be a disastrous choice. There would actually be more seating available for the Shea shows, because the stage would be in centerfield. Nearly all of the stadium's 55,000 seats were available, as were thousands more on the field. Seats in the upper level behind home plate were about as high up and far away from the stage as a seat for a concert could be—those seats aren't even particularly good for a baseball game. To like Shea Stadium, one would need to be a devoted New York Mets fan and old enough to have gone there to see them play in the days when Bruce Springsteen was toiling in Steel Mill. Its allure is purely sentimental. Otherwise, it is a big outdated facility. Parking is difficult for a half-filled Mets game.

Shea opened in 1964, right next door to the World's Fair, and it is the fifth oldest of the 30 current major league ballparks. Wrigley Field and Fenway Park are still in use primarily because they are beloved landmarks. Yankee Stadium is, well, The House That Ruth Built. Dodger Stadium, only two years older than Shea, is generally acknowledged as a baseball paradise, overlooking the beautiful San Gabriel Mountains. Shea overlooks a railroad yard and a bunch of auto salvage shops. It remains in use because the Mets just can't seem to get a new stadium built by anybody. Someday when it gets demolished, its rich history will be celebrated. There have been concerts there, but they have become a rarity in recent years due mostly to the inadequacy of the venue. Among the major acts that have played Shea are the Beatles, the Who, Simon and Garfunkel, Billy Joel, the Clash, the Police, the Rolling Stones, Grand Funk Railroad, and Pope John Paul II. One little known Shea concert took place on August 6, 1970. The Summer Festival for Peace featured Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Poco, Steppenwolf, the Rascals, and the Pacific Gas & Electric Company. On this

tour, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band played the first concerts at Shea since a double bill featuring Elton John and Eric Clapton on August 22, 1992.

New technology, like giant, high-quality video screens and better sound equipment, make the Shea Stadium concert experience better than it was in the time of the Beatles, but questions abounded as to the need for three more Bruce Springsteen shows in another enormous facility only weeks after playing Giants Stadium ten times. Empty seats are easy to understand in some cities, given the high price of tickets and the fact that there had been several other opportunities to see the band in the last few years, but over-saturation of the market is the only explanation for empty seats in New York City. The Shea Stadium shows were the first Bruce Springsteen concerts not to sell out in New York in 29 years; in fact, it was *exactly* 29 years. The show at Avery Fisher Hall on October 4, 1974, Bruce's first headlining New York gig outside of a club, was the last time prior to Shea that Bruce did not sell out a New York City concert. Enthusiasm—and money—for the Shea shows was difficult to muster for fans that had just been to many or even all of the Giants Stadium shows. The saving grace was that it was the final stop on the tour. Well, at least that's what the advertisements said.

So with all of the negatives clearly outlined and against all odds, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band simply played three of the best shows of the *Rising* tour at Shea Stadium. The stadium shows were different in several ways from the arena shows in the earlier part of the tour. The song choices were more geared toward pleasing an audience that might only be familiar with the more commercially successful material in Bruce's catalog. Some of the new songs from *The Rising* were skipped in favor of songs like "Rosalita" and "Glory Days." But there was also acknowledgment of the most loyal fans. The last few weeks of the tour saw Bruce break out an unprecedented number of tour premieres, long-forsaken songs, and first-time-ever performances. Even a fan who had attended the ten Giants Stadium shows got to see Bruce and the band play 19 songs over the three nights at Shea that had not been among the 76 played at Giants Stadium.

It was clear from the first moments of the show on October 1 that something different was going on. For many of the stadium shows throughout the summer, the band took the stage to the sound of Frank Sinatra singing "Summer Wind" or Sam Cooke's "Another Saturday Night." The first sound heard as the lights dimmed at Shea was the voice of President Bush talking about weapons of mass

THE SHEA TRIPLE PLAY

OCTOBER 1 SHEA STADIUM FLUSHING, NY

SETLIST: Souls of the Departed/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Night/Tunnel of Love/Brilliant Disguise/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Johnny 99/Man's Job/The Fuse/Because the Night/Badlands/No Surrender/Mary's Place/American Skin (41 Shots)/Into the Fire/Who'll Stop the Rain/Kitty's Back/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Johnny 99," "New York City Serenade," "Another Thin Line," "Roulette," "Man's Job," "Rendezvous," "New York City Serenade," and "If I Should Fall Behind."

NOTES: This first night of the *Rising* tour's final stand is the first concert at Shea Stadium since 1992. The tour premieres of "Johnny 99" (full band, last played by Bruce on the *Joad* tour in 1997), and "Man's Job" (its E Street debut, last played by Bruce in 1993). On the setlist but not played: "Roulette," replaced by "Night."

NO MORE PARTIES: It was probably the most political Bruce show I've experienced, even more than the acoustic shows of the *Tom Joad* tour. The relationship songs—among them a beautiful "Tunnel of Love" and a surprisingly vital "Man's Job"—that popped up here and there served as a reliever from the main theme that would have otherwise frozen the crowd (either in astonishment or boredom). Maybe the setlisted "Roulette" would have been too much tonight, and perhaps that's why it was dropped. The close of the main set—"American Skin," "Into the Fire," and "Who'll Stop the Rain"—left much of the crowd flabbergasted, certainly myself. To deliver them in that place and in that order was one of the loudest statements I've ever heard from Bruce. His public service announcement before "Born in the U.S.A." made it clear what it was all building up to in the end. If you expected a party, you were a couple of nights early. If you wanted a hell of a show, you definitely got one. —Giorgio Malucelli

OCTOBER 3 SHEA STADIUM FLUSHING, NY

SETLIST: Roulette/Candy's Room/The Rising/Lonesome Day/The Ties That Bind/Brilliant Disguise/Empty Sky/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Rendezvous/Another Thin Line/Souls of the Departed/Because the Night/Badlands/Prove It All Night/Mary's Place/New York City Serenade/Into the Fire/Janey, Don't You Lose Heart/Pink Cadillac/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/My City of Ruins/Born in the U.S.A./Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/Twist and Shout

NOTES: The tour premieres of "Roulette," "Rendezvous," "Another Thin Line" (an unreleased song co-written with Joe Grushecky, first played at the end of the Reunion tour), and "New York City Serenade," with Garry on stand-up bass. The second tour performance of "Pink Cadillac." "Into the Fire" is dedicated to fireman Jimmy O'Shea, who recently died in the line of duty. Special

guests: author Al Franken, jokingly introduced as "The Big Man" during the band intros; Mets pitcher Al Leiter on "Rosalita"; Jon Landau and Willie Nile on guitar on "Dancing in the Dark"; with the addition of Gary U.S. Bonds for "Twist and Shout."

WHO'S THE BOSS?: As the penetrating cold gradually permeated my bones in Shea, the anticipation grew, and I just felt that this penultimate night was going to be it. And it was. A loose, fun show, yet very tightly paced, with brilliant sound quality. The opening six numbers were as dynamic and forceful as could ever be hoped for. A thundering "Roulette" paired with the searing "Candy's Room" was a magnificent opening, and the surprises just kept coming—"Rendezvous," "Another Thin Line," "Souls of the Departed," "New York City Serenade"—so many rarely heard jewels exploding over us like magical fireworks. And as the crowd chanted "E Street Band," Bruce looked so happy and genuinely proud, and then he said, "That's right, I am the boss!" There was such a feeling of community in Shea stadium. Especially during the last song, where Gary Bonds sang beautifully and 14 people graced the stage at the end of an uplifting and unforgettable night. What a great way to fight the crisp cold of this fall night, twisting the night away. —Karl Birsthite

OCTOBER 4 SHEA STADIUM FLUSHING, NY

SETLIST: Code of Silence/The Rising/Lonesome Day/Roulette/Night/I Wish I Were Blind/Empty Sky/You're Missing/Waitin' on a Sunny Day/Johnny 99/Another Thin Line/Tunnel of Love/Because the Night/Badlands/Prove It All Night/Mary's Place/Back in Your Arms/Into the Fire/Light of Day/Bobby Jean/Born to Run/Seven Nights to Rock/Highway 61 Revisited/My City of Ruins/Land of Hope and Dreams/Rosalita/Dancing in the Dark/Quarter to Three/Twist and Shout/Blood Brothers

SOUNDCHECK: Includes "Blood Brothers," "I Wish I Were Blind," "Back in Your Arms," and "Code of Silence."

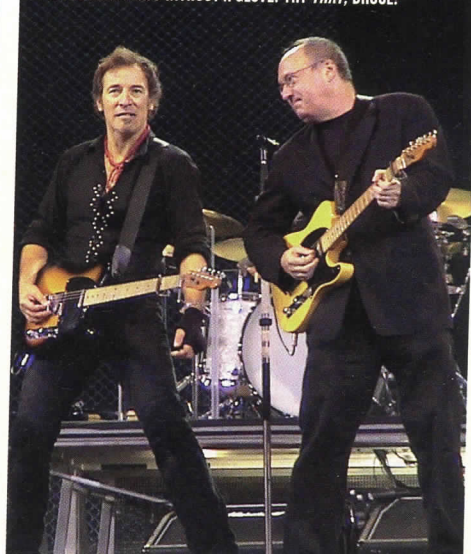
NOTES: "Welcome to the Last Dance," Bruce said before "Waitin' on a Sunny Day." "I'm getting a little misty here right about now... Steve, cheer me up!" Six tour premieres: "I Wish I Were Blind" (E Street debut), "Back In Your Arms," "Light of Day," "Highway 61 Revisited" (E Street debut), "Quarter to Three," and "Blood Brothers." Bob Dylan is the night's big guest, taking lead on "Highway 61 Revisited." Willie Nile and Jon Landau again take the stage for "Dancing in the Dark," along with ten-year-old Laura, up from the crowd for the *real* last dance. More guests joined in for "Quarter to Three" and "Twist and Shout": Producer Brendan O'Brien, Sony chief Don Ienner, Gary U.S. Bonds (and his wife and daughter), and Garland Jeffreys. "Code of Silence" and "Blood Brothers" bookend the show, the same opening and closing songs as the final night of the Reunion tour, with "Blood Brothers" again including the extra verse that Bruce added on 7/1/00. By far the longest show of the tour, at 30 songs.

The rarely performed "Souls of the Departed" followed. Written about an entirely different war in the Persian Gulf, and in the original context of an entirely different Bush administration, the song is a far more powerful statement than any speech Bruce delivered about war and politics. The speeches received a mixed response from the crowd. "Souls of the Departed," though only played a handful of times and in the last few weeks of the tour, was well received, and its point was impossible to miss. Whatever political point of view a concertgoer holds, the performance of "Souls" is an unmistakable and effective example of an artist making a political statement. (Encouraging the crowd on "Waitin' on a Sunny Day" to sing along "if [they] wanna impeach the president" would represent the other end of the spectrum.)

There was a speech from Bruce on opening night that had nothing to do with politics. The band introductions have always been something that Bruce has some fun with, occasionally moving the show into territory that would get it a PG-13 rating. An elementary school principal had sent Bruce a letter stating that he was to be in attendance with a few of his third and fourth grade students. He wrote, "...given their tender age, I don't know if it's such a great idea to be making comments regarding 'sexualization,' 'natural Viagra,' 'booty quaking,' and eating Philly cheese steaks while watching 'adult films' that I have heard at previous shows." After reading the letter from the stage, Bruce replied, "I can't really compromise my artistic integrity... I will leave out sexualization and natural Viagra, but booty quaking and eating Philly cheese steaks while watching adult films has got to stay. But anyway... if you're out there, all of these things are going to happen within the next eight minutes."

The humor and good feeling generated by the principal's letter was quickly replaced with controversy, as the band introductions and "Mary's Place" were followed by "American Skin (41 Shots)." The actual meaning of the song has become secondary. Many New York City police officers simply take offense at the

JON LANDAU PLAYS WITHOUT A GLOVE. TRY THAT, BRUCE!



ANDREW WARREN PHOTO

SEAT	SECTION	PRICE	DATE	TIME
SS1001E	FLR B3	6	24	B-TYPE
78.00	FLOOR B3 GATE LFFC	3.00		
NO CAMERA/REC/LASER POINT				
FLR B3	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN			
* ONE * ONE * ONE *				
6 24	& THE E STREET BAND			
ZMS796B	SHEA STADIUM-RAIN/SHINE			
9SEP03	WED OCT 1, 2003 7:30PM			

SEAT	SECTION	PRICE	DATE	TIME
SS1003E	FLR A2	4	10	ADULT
78.00	FLOOR A2 GATE LFFC	3.00		
NO CAMERA/REC/LASER POINT				
FLR A2	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN			
* TWO * TWO * TWO *				
4 10	& THE E STREET BAND			
ZVS703A	SHEA STADIUM-RAIN/SHINE			
13SEP03	FRI OCT 3, 2003 7:30PM			

SEAT	SECTION	PRICE	DATE	TIME
SS1004E	FLR A5	13	24	ADULT
78.00	FLOOR A5 GATE RFFC	3.00		
NO CAMERA/REC/LASER POINT				
FLR A5	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN			
* THREE * THREE * THREE *				
13 24	& THE E STREET BAND			
DM126A	SHEA STADIUM-RAIN/SHINE			
10SEP03	SAT OCT 4, 2003 7:30PM			



song. This is inexplicable—unless a police officer is actually in favor of firing 41 shots at an unarmed man. Police officers stationed within the field seating area began filing out of the area during the song. And there were noticeable jeers and even booing heard in the crowd. Between this and the shouts of "Shut up and sing" during the anti-Bush speech that would come later, it was hard to believe some of these folks were still managing to enjoy the show.

Newspapers in the days that followed told tales of Bruce's police escort to and from the stadium being terminated by angry cops. All parties concerned downplayed any problems. But "American Skin" was not played at the remaining two shows. The police may interpret this as a concession, but in reality it was not likely to appear in three shows in a row anyway, given the magnitude of the nightly set changes over the last weeks of the tour. Far more exciting than any controversy, real or perceived, was the fact that the show featured the first-ever full band interpretation of "Johnny 99," as well as the first performance of "Man's Job" in ten years, which also was the first time it had been played by the E Street Band. By encore time the whole stadium was shaking to "Kitty's Back," and no one was thinking about George W. Bush and the New York City Police Department.

The second show was less political in tone, the brief appearance of Al Franken during the band introductions notwithstanding. "Souls of the Departed" with the Bush introduction was played, but not as the opening song. Several rarely played songs, including a bunch of tour premieres, highlighted a powerful show. From the opening salvo of "Roulette," the show never let up. Among the rarities that night: "Brilliant Disguise," "Rendezvous," "Another Thin Line," "New York City Serenade," "Janey Don't You Lose Heart," "Pink Cadillac," and "Twist and Shout." Almost half of the show was devoted to material that would not be considered a regular part of the set. Bruce introduced New York Mets pitcher Al Leiter, known as a big Springsteen fan, by saying, "He pitches here." Good thing, because Al didn't prove to be much of a singer. His tambourine playing was equally questionable, and he later said he was terrified at being up there. Bruce's other guests that night fared bet-

ter. "Dancing in the Dark" featured manager Jon Landau as well as Willie Nile, both of whom played guitar and remained on stage for "Twist and Shout," which also featured Gary U.S. Bonds.

The guests for night two made for a fun finish to a terrific show. But one of the guests the following night seemed to blow even Bruce's mind. Another show full of rarely played songs, including "Code of Silence," "Back in Your Arms," and the E Street Band's first ever performance of "I Wish I Were Blind," became even more special with Bruce's announcement at the start of the second encore: "We have my great friend and inspiration with us tonight. Mr. Bob Dylan."

Stunned disbelief is the best way to describe the audience reaction to this truly unprecedented moment. Springsteen and Dylan have shared the stage on a few other occasions—a 1994 Dylan show at Roseland in New York saw Bob literally coerce Bruce and Neil Young from the VIP section to play guitar, and the 1998 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony found both of them in a congregation of at least 50 rock stars crowded onto the stage for a messy jam session. But their only real performance together had been at the Concert for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland in 1995. As special as that was, Dylan gracing the stage at Shea Stadium was clearly an emotional moment for Bruce. After a somewhat ragged performance of "Highway 61 Revisited" in which there was some trouble with his microphone, Dylan quickly departed. But Bruce was still thinking about him a couple of songs later as he introduced "Land of Hope and Dreams," saying, "...he made me think big thoughts... got me thinking about the world outside my little town. I don't know if great men make history or if history makes great men, but I know Bob's one of the greatest, now and forever." He closed his nightly political public service announcement by stating that the search for truth is the American way, "...and I learned that from Bob Dylan."

The guest-filled encores continued with Willie Nile, Jon Landau and Gary U.S. Bonds returning, this time with Garland Jeffreys along as well. Bonds' presence prompted the long-awaited return of his 1961 number-one hit "Quarter to Three," which had been a regular part of Bruce's encores from 1974 to 1981. In

Principal Hughes, with Dominique, Emily, and Nicholas (clockwise from top left).



IT'S THE PRINCIPAL

I SENT THE ATTACHED LETTER to Bruce c/o Jon Landau at Shea Stadium, and honestly, I had only the faint hope that the letter might get us a seat upgrade. Little did I know.... I was floored when Bruce used the letter as his intro to "Mary's Place" at Shea on Wednesday night. I'm still not over it. My kids became instant celebrities, recognized by many in the crowd. "That's the principal! Those are the kids!" They will remember that night forever.

I've attended many Bruce shows since the Palladium stint in 1976 and have never heard him read a letter from anyone. I've been inundated with phone calls and e-mails from people I don't even know telling me how happy they are for my kids and my school for this marvelous bit of personal attention from The Boss. The *New York Sun* even wrote an article about the experience and came to the school to take the kids' picture. In a community that doesn't traditionally get much good press, it was great to get some positive attention for our children. Residents were truly honored by the attention and even happier that their neighborhood school was spotlighted. It was a wonderful experience for all of us.

And if Bruce reads this, Principal For a Day is on March 31. Think about it. After all, we are The Best School in the Universe.

John C. Hughes
Principal
PS 48, Hunts Point, The Bronx

P.S. 48
1290 Spofford Avenue
Bronx, New York 10474
(718) 589-4312

John C. Hughes, Principal
Rosanne Caplan, Assistant Principal (UA)

Dorothy Banilla, Assistant Principal
September 29, 2003

Dear Mr. Springsteen:

This is just a short letter to let you know that I will be attending your show on Wednesday, October 1st with three of my students, 3rd grader Nicholas Guassy, and 4th graders, Emily Chisum and Dominique Williams. We will be sitting in Mezzanine Section MR 11, Row M, seats 11-14.

P.S. 48 is located in the Hunts Point section of the South Bronx, known by many (mostly by us, actually) as The Best School in the Universe. I am totally thrilled to have these great kids as my guests.

Given their tender age, I don't know if it's such a great idea to be making comments regarding "sexualization," "natural Viagra," "booty quaking" and eating Philly cheesesteaks while watching "adult films" that I have heard at previous shows. On the other hand, while I am the principal, I understand that you are The Boss.

Thanks for your time and consideration. Drop by beautiful P.S. 48 any time.

Sincerely,

John C. Hughes
John C. Hughes
Principal

SUMMER TOUR 2003


* Solo-piano arrangement
** Solo-acoustic arrangement

[illegible]

an odd bit of serendipity, the first known performance of "Quarter to Three" by Springsteen had occurred exactly 29 years earlier, at that October 4, 1974 show at Avery Fisher Hall. That show is most remembered for the fact that the stage collapsed during "Quarter to Three," preventing the completion of the song. Could Bruce have been aware of the anniversary of the famous stage collapse?

After a rousing version of "Twist and Shout," the guests departed. *The Rising* tour ended just as had the 1999 - 2000 tour, with Bruce and the band holding hands front and center for an emotional performance of "Blood Brothers."

The song had not been played since that final show at Madison Square Garden in 2000. This night in the big ballpark in Queens Bruce told the crowd, "The past four or five years have been some of the most fun and exciting of my life. Thanks for sharing them with us."

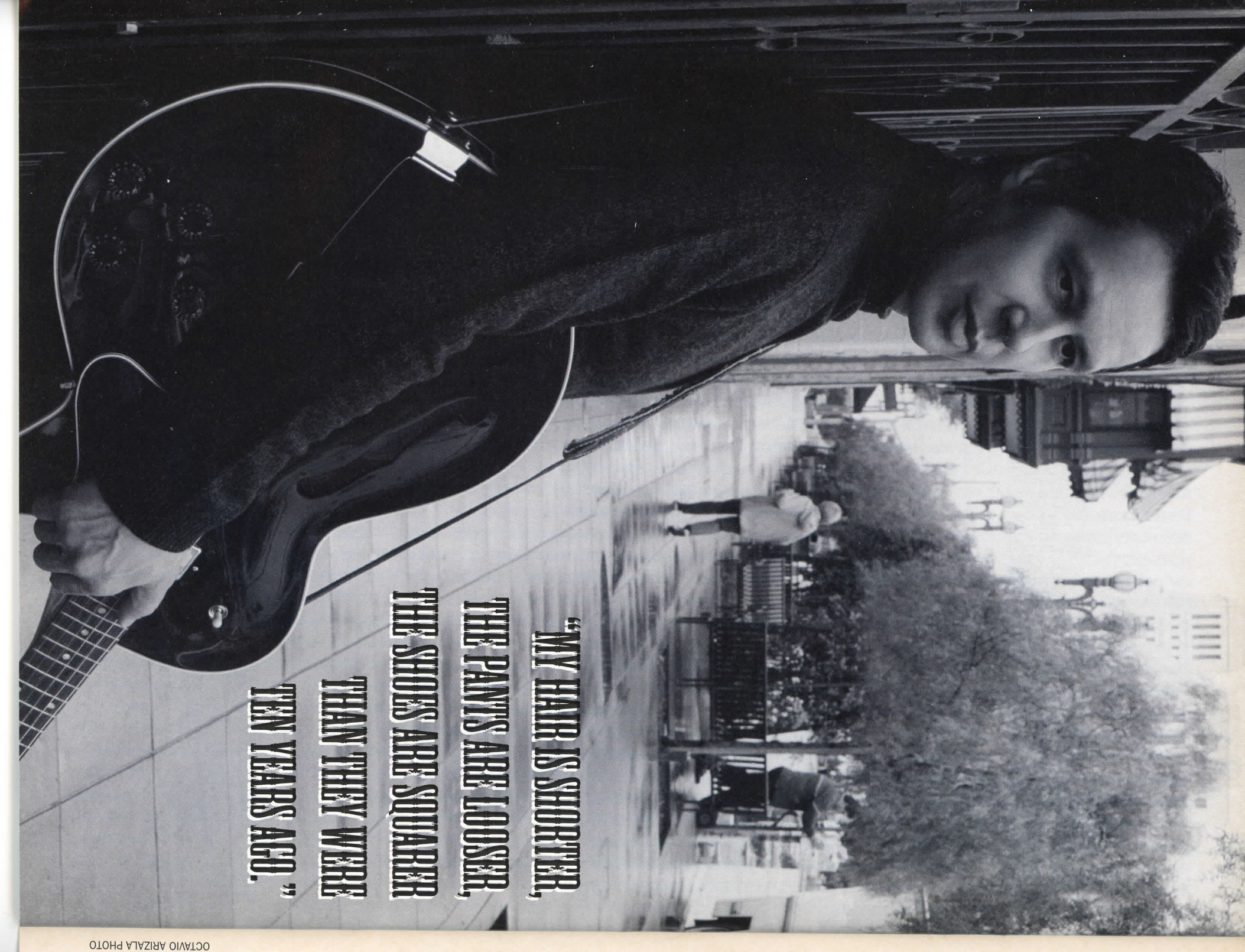
And so it ended. 120 shows in 14 months. The questions from fans regarding the unnecessarily large venues at the end of the tour and the failure to even play in some parts of the country will be forgotten by the next tour. The debate about whether or not a concert stage is the proper forum for an artist to express his political opinions might even cease. What will linger is that—in spite of the fact that this tour may not have always lived up to fan's expectations on some levels—musically, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band delivered the goods almost every night. And when the powers that be finally do get around to tearing down Shea Stadium, many will remember that three of the most glorious nights in its history came courtesy of Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. 

Tour report compiled by Christopher Phillips

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Steve Aberle, Peter Abraham, Guy Aecio, Jay Algar, Chris Allen, Greg Allen, Randi Anderson, Todd Anderson, George Argento, Kevin Barnett, Ernie Barsamian, Ted Benson, Paul Bernstein, Becky Beyers, Mike Brazinski, Mike Brennan, Dan Bolton, Anthony Castrovine, Jeff Capek, Peter Chanca, Joe Clark, Joe Cormier, Mary Culinan, Colin Dale, Frank DiStasi, John Duda, Gary Dunsmir, Danny Eitner, Kim Farnacci, Eric Field, Bob Formont, John L. Gage, Pierluigi Gamba, Dan George, Matt Godfrey, Elizabeth Goldstein, Anita Grenda, Jack Grosso, Tony Hansen, Ben Hassenger, Brian Hawkins, Mauricio Heibron, Linda Herbkersman, Eric Hodges, Chris Hofmann, Brian Jacobs, Hank Kalet, Lou Kassa, Bill Kenney, Howard Klatzky, Mark Kravitz, Tony Kuzniski, Dan Laurent, Charlie Levey, Joe Lewin, Bob Ley, Melissa McMillan-Cunningham, Giorgio Malucelli, Jon-Jean Marchio, Kirk Marley, Steve Marlin, Jorg Mehlow, Bob Mientus, Dave Miller, Stephen Dorian Miner, Bill Molnar, Rob Oslan, Barry Patton, George Paul, Chris Pazik, Shawn Poole, Brian & Stephanie McAlister Poon, Leonard Prewite, Dan Quesnel, John Schlichter, Lisa Sgaraniella, Matthew Shames, Tony Solari, Art Stoumbeis, Steven Svoboda, Vivian Swift, Dan Zeligla, Sheila Thoman, Brenda VanHorn, Vince Versaci, Andrew Warren, Chris Zaracki, and everyone else who helped out this time around. We couldn't have covered every show of this summer leg—or of the entire *Rising* tour—without the support and assistance from many of our readers around the world. Let's do it again sometime, huh?

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**"MY HAIR IS SHORTER,
THE PANTS ARE LOOSER,
THE SHOES ARE SQUARER
THAN THEY WERE
TEN YEARS AGO."**

TWANG & TRUST

THE BACKSTREETS INTERVIEW WITH

SHANE FONTAYNE

WHEN SHANE FONTAYNE WAS TAPPED to join Bruce Springsteen's 1992-'93 touring unit, he was only the third guitarist to play in a band of Bruce's since the Castiles. The honor passed to Fontayne—minus the E Street distinction—from Steve Van Zandt and Nils Lofgren. Talk about some big shoes to fill. Metaphorically, at least.

Prior to hooking up with the Boss in '92, Fontayne's profile was highest as a member of mid-'80s band Lone Justice (a band for which Van Zandt co-wrote and co-produced, along with Jimmy Iovine). But he'd been recording as long as Springsteen. Born Mick Barakan, Fontayne began writing songs at the age of 12, and his first record was with Byzantium in 1972. Thirty years, a few bands, and countless session gigs later, he joined E Street keyboardist Roy Bittan, bassist Tommy Simms, and drummer Zack Alford as the core of Springsteen's touring band for *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town*.

For the better part of a year, the '92-'93 band toured Europe and the U.S. with Springsteen, adding songs to the set along the way that, in many cases, they had not only never played before, they had never heard before. But that wasn't nearly their only challenge. For many Springsteen fans, the abandonment of the E Street Band was a bitter pill to swallow. The cool reception of *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* seemed as much a reaction to Springsteen's changing partners as to arguable weaknesses in the records themselves. All of this might make for a difficult experience for a newly hired hand, and Fontayne was not oblivious to any disapproval among the audience. But as he tells *Backstreets*, he was buoyed by the "absolute knowledge" that he was exactly where Springsteen wanted him to be. "If he hadn't been so certain of us," Shane says, "then yeah, it would have been a different matter. But I didn't have to worry about that."

Springsteen put that band up on blocks after the '92-'93 World Tour, but Fontayne's role in the detour off E Street continued. In 1994, he joined Springsteen in the studio for extensive work on an album that remains unreleased to this day, the lost "hip-hop album" known to fans as *Waiting on the End of the World*. Bruce also called Shane in to play guitar on Joe Grushecky & the Houserocker's *American Babylon*, which Springsteen produced.

The touring band's 1993 swan song was a Madison Square Garden performance of "Follow That Dream," and ten years later Shane Fontayne has continued to do just that. This summer brought the first solo album of his career, with the self-produced *What Nature Intended* marking his move from right-hand man to singer-songwriter. An early fan of Shane's debut was Nic Harcourt, Program Director at L.A.'s KCRW and host of "Morning Becomes Eclectic," who raved, "in the midst of today's sterile pop glib, along comes an album of songs that actually live, breathe, and talk." A forthcoming live disc, *Voodoo at the Mint*, was recorded at the 6/11/03 CD release party for *What Nature Intended* and will be available from www.shanefontaine.com.

Fontayne spoke with *Backstreets* from Los Angeles, graciously casting his mind a decade back to some glory days with the Boss—recalling his head-to-head studio audition, "the big show," and Little Steven nearly joining the band.

Congratulations on your first solo album... from what I gather, nearly 40 years after you wrote your first song. Have you actually had this itch for a long time, as far as stepping out on your own and doing things for yourself?

No, I haven't. As a child I did start out as a writer and a singer and a songwriter—that's what I did when I was young. But then coming to America I became a "guitar player," and I forgot about [the rest]. I didn't write so much, or if I did I was writing for somebody else, or collaborating. I took on this other thing where I became an accompanist or, in a lot of cases, a right-hand-man type. Somebody that was able to help co-produce, or to be somebody for someone else to lean on, which is something that is a strength of mine. It also allowed me to be able to recede a little bit, into a place that was certainly comfortable, where these are my boundaries and I feel like I can really do this well. So within all of that, I drifted away from writing and singing. It was only in the last few years, and I think partly a function of getting older, when I just wanted to do something a little bit more for myself, and not to rely so much on working for somebody else.

Although, for the most part, I've been fortunate not to feel that. Even working with Bruce—he always made it feel like you were working with him and not for him. But then you realize that—and particularly in his regard—it doesn't matter how big the paycheck is, once that paycheck stops [laughs]... you feel like, oh my God, I'm unemployed again!

Well, since the '92-'93 tour, you've continued your career working with Marc Cohn, John Waite, Steve Forbert...

In such a large part, working with Springsteen afforded me the key to a door... not that I didn't already have, but it just made it that much more accessible. So much great stuff came from working with Bruce, whether it was Mutt Lange and Bryan Adams calling me to do a session because they'd

BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

seen the MTV *Plugged* thing we did... whether directly or indirectly, whatever came after that came somewhat through the Springsteen connection.

Prior to that, you were on my radar because of Lone Justice—I was a big fan of that band. But yeah, I would imagine that the Springsteen tour raised your profile from that point on.

And the Bruce connection, to me, came directly through Lone Justice, actually.

Let's go back and talk about that for a minute. How did you get involved with Lone Justice in the first place? Was there actually an audition?

Yeah, there kind of was. My entry into that was Greg Sutton. It's funny, I just had a meeting with Marvin Etzioni, who's involved with management with me at the moment—Marvin was the original bass player and also one of the primary writers in the first incarnation of Lone Justice. Marvin wrote "You Are the Light," he wrote "East of Eden." But Greg Sutton, who took over for Marvin on the bass, was somebody that I met when I came to L.A. in the '80s; he would be at jam sessions or whatever. Greg was already playing in Lone Justice, and things were changing in the band. He brought me in, and so there was a brief audition period where I went and did a rehearsal, and Jimmy Iovine came and checked it out. Everybody seemed happy, but they wanted to make sure that whoever they were going to get into the band was going to work in the studio. So I was brought into the studio one night, right at the beginning of *Shelter*; and they were cutting "I Found Love."

So Steve Van Zandt was involved at that point.

Steven was there that night, and he was directly involved in me joining the band. "I Found Love" was one of the songs that Steven co-wrote on that record, and Maria was in with some backing singers, doing some vocals. It got later and later, and it seemed like it was going to get too late for me to go in, but I had been sitting outside in the hallway with my six-string bass. I was just kind of thinking, "Okay, what would I do on this?"

It got late, and Steven came out and said, "Look, okay, it's kind of getting... do you want to just go in and give it a pass and see what happens?" I was all fired up and ready to go. So I went into the studio and plugged in, and I did one take on the song—which was kind of like when I played with Bruce for the first time. It was total balls-to-the-wall, high energy. And at the end of the tape, Steven just kind of sat back in his chair and laughed—he said, "I wasn't expecting that!" I was approaching it from this Duane Eddy, very twangy kind of low six-string bass approach, which took him by surprise.

The next morning I got a phone call from Jimmy Iovine, saying, "Last night you made everybody very happy." So I knew, okay, this was going to happen for me. That was how that came about: there was a brief audition thing leading up to it, but the studio audition was what really nailed it. And Steven's opinion and his

sanctioning of it was crucial. It was just a done deal with him. It was like, great, y'know... *next!*

You mentioned what it was like when you played with Bruce for the first time, and I definitely want to hear about that—but leading up to that, had you met him already during the Lone Justice days?

I met Bruce prior to the Lone Justice days. I didn't meet him during that time, but when I played with Garland Jeffreys around maybe '81 or '82, something like that, we played... I'm thinking it was the Stone Pony, and Bruce came and saw that show and came

that time. So Bruce... well, I got this phone call in early January from Jimmy Iovine saying that he had spoken to an old friend of his, and he wanted to know if I was interested in going out on the road. And my response to Jimmy was, "Well, who's your friend?" [laughs] And he just responded with the one word: *Springsteen*. I was like, oh my God.

Because Bruce had inquired of him, "Who was that guitar player for Lone Justice?" But I was involved with the band called Merchants of Venus; we had our record out on Elektra, and we had been out promoting it. It was something where I was an equal part of the band, and I was telling Jimmy about this—and

Jimmy sounded very unimpressed by the whole thing: "Well, fine, Shane, whatever you like..." [laughs].

So I hung up the phone with him and, of course, the seed had been planted. A couple hours later I called Jimmy back and said, "You know what? I should probably consider this. This is something that probably bears looking into." [Laughs.] So he said that he'd let Bruce know.

And that was the connection as far as I know—and in that way, it kind of bypassed Steven. As far as I know it was just Bruce knowing that he was going to be putting this other band together, seeing the thing on TV and knowing that Jimmy had managed Lone Justice—and Jimmy, of course, had engineered *Born to Run*, worked on *Darkness on the Edge of Town* (and that was so pivotal on that tour, that whole record). So, yes, the connection there really was Jimmy Iovine.

And in some ways that might seem like an offer you couldn't refuse, but was that a difficult decision to make when it came down to it?

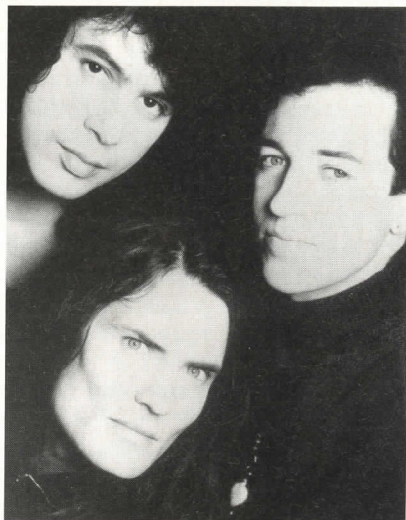
You know... good question. This occurred in January of '92, and we found out with Merchants of Venus pretty soon afterwards that the record company wasn't going to pick up our option. And so as far as putting my eggs into one basket, as far as me pursuing this opportunity, it started to look a lot more attractive. At that point that's all that it was—I didn't know to what extent. Then Jimmy put me in touch with somebody else, a third party that was going to be coordinating the audition process for Bruce.

Was that Debbie Gold?

It was Debbie, yeah. And this was the first time ever that I was in a situation where there was somebody who was like a third party contractor. That was an alien process to me. Usually it would be management or a road manager contacting you and just setting something up. But this process was more drawn out than that, to the extent that I was kind of flying blind. I touched base with Jimmy periodically between January and March, and as time went by I found myself thinking, yes, this would be great. I was loving the idea of it, and I knew that it was still some-



BANDS WITH ACTUAL NAMES:
Fontayne with Lone Justice (above, fourth from left) and Merchants of Venus (at right, upper left corner)



backstage afterwards. I also met Bruce one time in New York, on Bleecker Street, he came to see another show that I played with somebody. He was always someone who came backstage to let you know that he was there to lend his support—just in that way, just as moral support, because obviously, whoever the artist was, they were so excited at seeing him there. And he would always come back with something positive to say, and with a kind word about the musicians as well. Or at least, in my regard, that's how I encountered it—these couple of fleeting moments, "Wow, that was Bruce Springsteen!" So there were a couple of occasions, but as far as the Lone Justice years, I didn't meet him at that time.

Joining up with Bruce in '92, then, was Jimmy Iovine the main connection, or Steven, or a combination of the two?

In '91, at the end of the year, I guess Bruce had just finished making the two records—*Human Touch* and *Lucky Town*. The Lone Justice *Saturday Night Live* that we did was a Christmas show—the Christmas of '86 I think, maybe even '85—and they'd rerun it at

LONE JUSTICE: COURTESY OF SHANE FONTAYNE; MERCHANTS OF VENUS: DEBORAH FEINGOLD PHOTO

thing that was alive. It was an opportunity that hadn't just been thrown out there as a cattle-call thing. It was just a question of when Bruce was going to get around to that part of the process. So I had been talking to Debbie, and she was like, "Well, he's still looking at bass players and drummers. When we get around to guitar players, I'll let you know." And my nature is—well, when I was a kid and I wrote my first song, I wanted the Yardbirds to record it.

I read that in your bio, and I thought that was pretty fascinating, I hadn't known that. You were 12, and you pitched for first song to the Yardbirds?

I was 12 years-old. I went down and met the Yardbirds and then was given this opening [by their manager, Giorgio Gomelski]: "Yeah, I want to make a demo of this song." That's all I needed. I hounded [Gomelski] week after week.

So there's this kind of dogged "if I decide to do something I'm going to do it" kind of approach. The same way with this thing. I made sure that I stayed on top of it with Debbie, knowing that this was my priority, but it wasn't hers.

What was her priority? What was her job? Was she basically coordinating auditions, or was she actually seeking out talent for the new band?

You know, I think she was the person who was designated by Bruce or by Jon Landau to take care of gathering the information. People's names would be given to her, and she would then take care of the logistics of setting up the whole process. So over these couple of months I would touch base with her, and there would be really no new news other than that Bruce was still looking at bass players and drummers and wasn't ready yet to move beyond that... until... he was. [Laughs]. And then I discovered that my name was at the top of the list. I don't even know... I guess there were others on the list, but evidently I was the first one—I was the first one in there.

That's a nice place to be.

Absolutely. And I don't know how much I was aware of that, necessarily. One interesting thing that happened: I was on the East Coast, I was living in Pennsylvania at the time, and the rehearsals were out in L.A. So finally they flew me out to the West Coast and put me up in a hotel. And in the hotel lobby I met—not knowing who it was at the time—I met [drummer] Zack Alford. I knew he was there on Bruce business, audition-wise, but I didn't know if he was another guitar player or what. And I don't know if he thought I was another drummer, but we were in the lobby and we're both kind of eyeing each other. There's that kind of stand-offish thing, like: are you competition, or what?

So this first audition was set up, and I had told Debbie what equipment I wanted there. It was the studio that Roy [Bittan] owned at that time in Hollywood, a lovely studio. And I was there early—you know, one of the things that I heard a lot on this recent tour of mine was, "Wow, you're really early!" [laughs], which is typical for me. I mean, I'm always at soundchecks first. I just hate being late. So I got there early, and I figured out that Zack was there to audition for Bruce as a drummer. And at this point this is maybe his third or fourth callback to audition

for Bruce. I guess they had already seen Tommy Simms, but Tommy wasn't available, so somebody else was there playing bass. And I come in feeling a bit nervous—the equipment, which I had asked for, only half of it was there. I had asked for two amplifiers because at that time I was playing in stereo, and there was one amp there. Obviously I wanted to present myself in the best light, and I was a little bit nervous about this. And Debbie said, "Oh, you know, we'll just call the rental company and they'll bring another one here in half an hour."

But Terry Magovern was there, who is Bruce's personal assistant, and from that first moment I was given the essence of the Springsteen organization, which was Terry saying to me, "He'll be here in a while, just have fun and relax. He's going to make you feel right at home.... and, by the way, here's some money for per diem." And I'm like: what?! Are you kidding me? Just being so friendly and welcoming—and not in any way like "I've been working with this person this many years" or whatever—it was all genuine.

Putting you at ease?

Putting me at ease as much as anybody could. And so I set up my gear—the other amplifier arrived and was set up how I wanted it to be set up. Bruce came in, and I guess to some extent he had requested my presence—he was aware that it was me that was going to be there, and as I said, we had met a couple of times briefly in the past. I had done my homework on both of the new records, and while there was a lot of material, it was still quite easy to learn. The songs, to a large extent, followed a certain format: verses and choruses, and then a bridge.... I felt comfortable about the style of it. And that, ultimately, was the crucial element: there was no virtuosity that was required in this—you just had to get it.

The first thing that we played was something that

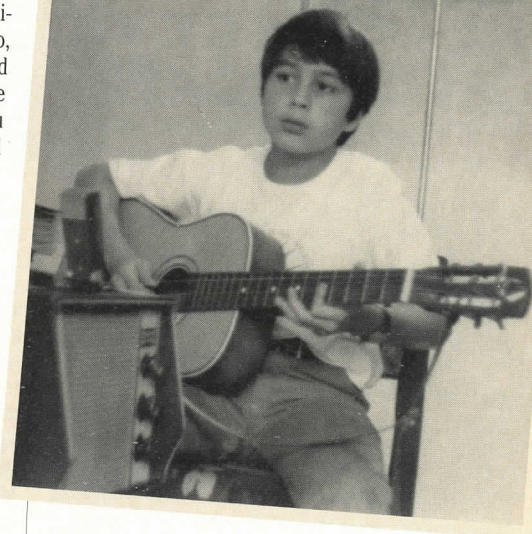
he just seemed to pull out off the top of his head—it wasn't anything off of these records. And, man, it was just energy. He and I were facing each other—we were set up in this recording studio, and he and I just came to face each other—and it was just pure energy. He seemed happy and thrilled for me to be going for it.

I wasn't intimidated, because Bruce did make me feel at ease. There was just something about his manner—we were just playing, and you could tell that he was enjoying this.

So this was you, Bruce, Zack...

Roy was there, too, playing. So it was Bruce, Roy, Zack, and I can't remember—maybe it was James

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN:
Shane at 13, The Yardbirds? Check.



LEON M. BARAKAN PHOTO

THE CORE: The '92-'93 band
as they appeared on SNL



From left: SHANE FONTAYNE, ZACHARY ALFORD, BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN, TOMMY SIMMS, and ROY BITTAN.

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BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

COLUMBIA
9205

Jamerson, Jr., coming to play bass that night. Jamerson was the legendary Motown bass player—between him and Carol Kaye they did all the Motown records. Jamerson was famous for so many records—"Reach Out I'll Be There," great signature stuff. His son also was a bass player, and I seem to remember him being there. This was just like improvisation in a rock 'n' roll sense, where Bruce had just pulled something out, and his energy was just like it would be on stage—the way he was directing traffic and exalting to us in the studio, to whoever in the control room... it was a performance.

We played for maybe half an hour or 45 minutes, and then we took a break. And when we finished playing, he and Roy kind of flanked me, and I could tell that he was obviously happy and excited. We started walking to the control room, and he said something like, "Wow... that's a lot of twang." My response to him was: "Was it too much?" And he and Roy, without missing a beat, both of them just went, "Uh-uh." "Nope." Y'know: Twang is good. I had been playing my Gretsch, and he was playing his Telecaster—it had a sound. There was a sound there. And so it was almost the same thing that happened after going in and doing the Lone Justice audition.

Jon Landau had arrived at some point after we got started, or maybe he arrived with Bruce, I can't remember. Jon Landau told me that night, "You know, Bruce had a great time tonight. Can you come back tomorrow?" Sure. I'm here. So I went back again the next night, and Jon had given me some direction: "Tonight maybe see if... just kind of rein it in a little bit." Because the first evening had just been wild. Bruce had told me that night, something to the effect of, "Wow, some of the stuff you're playing we should have had you play on these new records"—which were already done and marketed. I wasn't playing parts off the record; I knew how the songs went, and I was just doing what I do.

And was that encouraged?

That kind of set the tone for the whole relationship with him—I wasn't really adhering to the parts that were on the record unless it was something which really seemed to be key. There was only one time that Bruce actually asked me to play a specific part to any of his songs. And that was to strum the acoustic guitar on "My Hometown"—rather than strumming it up and down, to just do all downstrokes. To just kind of mute it a little bit with the palm and always do downstrokes—that was the only time that he requested any part be played in a particular way.

Other than that you did your own thing?

Oh, yeah, totally. And I think that was what he loved about it. So I went back the next night and played with him, and then went back to Pennsylvania. Then I was called back again a few weeks later, I think he wanted to see how it sounded with Tommy and Zack and myself. And then we went home again....

One of the great things about working with Bruce throughout my relationship with him was whenever he wanted to do something there would basically be a call, "Can you come out tomorrow?" You know, "Can you fly from New York to L.A. tomorrow... Can you fly from L.A.... Can you be here tomorrow?" Yes was always the answer. Could I come out there tomorrow night? Yes, I'll be there.

So finally he just brought us all into the room at the beginning of rehearsal one day—we pretty much knew at this point, this must have probably been the third time that he brought me back—and he just gathered us there in the center of the room and said, "Welcome to the big show."

The major leagues! And at this point it's just you, Tommy, Zack, and Roy.

I think it was just the four of us. I'm wondering if maybe Bobby King had come in at that point, but it

was before Crystal [Taliaferro] and the other girls were to come in. And we stood there.... It was interesting. I mean, here I am at the beginning of a relationship with Bruce, and he'd come up to me and say, "You know, we've gotten approached by *Saturday Night Live*." And of course he knew that I had done it. What was my opinion on it? Was it something that would be worth doing, in my opinion?

And I'm like, what is this? He's asking my opinion about this? What was the experience like—he wanted to know. This was something that I had done, and I guess he had never done network TV before, or certainly not live TV. And he was interested in finding out what my take on it was.

That must have gone a long way for you: to get the sense from the very beginning that he's valuing you for all sorts of stuff that you can bring to the table.

Yeah—another thing that asked my opinion on was the idea of having "girls" in the band. We talked about the various kinds of ups and downs, the different dynamics that could be involved in our own experiences with having "girls" in the band....

Basically, he felt like he could trust us. To give talent and energy and a sound to this new material in a way that he felt it was all centered. I remember one day—in the rehearsals, because he would tell us ahead of time, "tomorrow let's look at these songs," or something—he said he wanted to do "Man's Job" tomorrow. We came in the next day, we were there a little while before him, and we ran through the song. And it sounded great—it sounded like the record. We played it for him, and he just seemed bowled over.

The day that we did *Saturday Night Live* he gave us... well, not a pep talk, but he let us know that while we had only rehearsed together for a few days before doing this national show, that, yeah, in the old days he'd rehearse the E Street Band for months before even doing a show in Asbury. He was just letting us know that he trusted us, and that was a message that he conveyed to us throughout the duration of the relationship.

A couple of things occur to me as you're describing the audition process. Mainly, did you have a sense of what he was looking for—whether it something that you'd been told, or that Bruce conveyed to you, or that you just sensed? Did he have something specific in mind for what he wanted his guitar player to be, or what he wanted the band to be?

I think initially for him, I would guess... certainly starting with a rhythm section—a bass player and drummer—that he felt comfortable with. And I think it was no coincidence that the rhythm section was black, and had that edge to it, you know. Myself, I guess, obviously there's a certain ethnicity to how I look. I don't know how much all of this played into it for him. But as far as musically, I think... gosh, it's hard to say. He never had to come out and say what he was looking for. I think he knew immediately—in my regard, he knew immediately that this was working for him. It worked for him in a way where energetically he wanted something to feed off of, to bounce off of. I think the whole aspect of where I was coming from in regards to his music, evidently it worked—whether it was using the six-string bass or the Gretsch or whatever I was using that had a similar kind of "twanginess."

GETTING READY FOR PRIME TIME:
The SNL performance, 5/9/92



He sure liked the twang, from the sound of it.

Yeah, he did; he *does*. So I think musically it kind of took care of itself in that regard, because as a band-leader he was able to just infuse you with the energy and the inspiration. And he certainly had a very intuitive take on how this was sounding. So as far as Bruce articulating what he was looking for, all that he really conveyed was that he was giving of himself all the time, and he was just friendly—everything he was doing was anti-pressure, you know? Everything about it was: this is just so easy—it's easy, it's fun. And the whole generosity of his spirit and the whole organization, it was like, can it get better than this? And I can safely say, no.

I'd think there would have to be some pressure, at least before the band really "went public."

Well, as the [rehearsal] process went on, before we hit the road, I think he might have hit a wall to a certain extent and was maybe realizing that he was about to go out and do this in front of all of these fans who had been supporting him over all the years. And there was a moment where Steven almost came out on tour with us.

Really?

Yeah. I think Steven wanted to, and it was something which was kind of on the table for a moment. I know as the band got bigger, I somehow felt my role maybe get a little smaller.

As far as Crystal and the other backup singers?

Yeah, it all certainly started becoming a bigger production. The first things that we had done had been with Roy, Zack, Tommy, myself, and Bobby—that's how we did the Bottom Line. And it was without Bobby, in fact, that we had done *Saturday Night Live*. But then as we were rehearsing more on a big soundstage here in L.A., Bruce decided that he wanted to have the extra sound of bringing in Crystal, and then just taking me aside—"What do you think about having a girl in the back?" We were now on the big stage, realizing that this was the "big show," the top of the game. Finally, the press had the names of the musicians—this was in the *Daily News*, it was in the *New York Post*, it was in the *New York* whatever—in all the national press. This was now Springsteen without the E Street guys.

I think Steven came into rehearsals at that point. The Bottom Line in New York had been a secret industry event, and we did a similar kind of thing at the soundstage, to just prepare us for getting out on the road. Steven had been there throughout this process and I think was trying to get Bruce—who wanted to focus not exclusively, but largely, on the new material—Steven was seeing places where it's like, "No, you guys need to do 'Prove It All Night' here"—that kind of thing. "You need to incorporate some of these...."

Time went by, and we were trying "Soul Driver," and it wasn't one of his songs that easily worked live—we tried it a few times at shows, and then at a point we didn't do it anymore. And then other songs would be brought in—so we would get these notes asking us to learn "Racing in the Street," or depending on where we were playing, you know, "Jersey Girl." Or "Sandy." And then we started incorporating

songs like "Trapped" into the set. That song started becoming a pivotal moment in the set. And then "Many Rivers To Cross" by Jimmy Cliff, which used the singers. And so the show itself, with the aggregation of people who were involved, I think it started taking on its own shape. And Bruce never seemed to fight what anything was. I never felt like he second-guessed himself; it wasn't like he was particularly public with what his thoughts were, but he always supported us. He obviously always wanted to make it be as good as he could—for himself and for the audience. So it's an interesting evolution—looking at the set list, from the first show in Sweden and how that changed even by the time we got to the States and the Meadowlands.

Absolutely, the show certainly did evolve all along the way and, as you say, incorporated more and more of the older material. And if I understand you right, that was Little Steven's original suggestion at the rehearsal stage?

Yeah, as I seem to remember, Steven certainly was instrumental—and obviously his relationship with Bruce is pretty unique. I mean, apart from Roy, who was on stage, Steven was the only one of the E Street guys who was there during any of the rehearsal process and had Bruce's ear: "Yeah, this is good, that's good... I can understand you wanted to do this. But, look, you really need to do some of this, too!" [laughs].

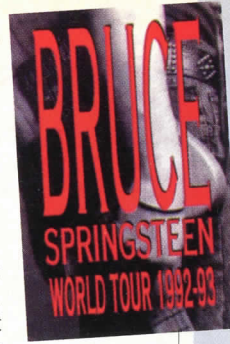
Did Steven ever actually strap on the guitar and play in rehearsal?

Yes, it did come to that point. And in doing so... I think we already felt like we had our own thing, which we were doing, and, of course, the nature of him being on stage was that he tended to direct traffic. Yeah, there was a little... I mean, at that point we weren't sure for a couple of days—where are we looking for direction here?

Right, and I imagine that would have been a completely different experience for you had that happened. On this current tour, with Nils and Steven both onstage, it's doable—but obviously it would have made that a very different tour for you.

Yes. Even though, fortunately, I had a previous relationship with Little Steven which had always been good, to the extent where, in Lone Justice, he and myself and Maria McKee had worked alone on some of the stuff, writing and producing. But even so, yeah, it would have changed my role substantially.

And then I remember even during the rehearsal processes—once it was finalized, okay, this is how we're going to go out on the road—we then experimented with changing the staging around: switching the singers over to the other side of the stage, moving the guitar to the other side, and switching the organ as well. Because Bruce and Jon Landau weren't sure that the stage looked balanced, or what side Tommy should be on. And it was at that point that it was decided, because we were wireless, that Tommy would switch places on stage during the show, depending on who was where or who was on stage.



1992-'93 CRIBSHEET

March 31, 1992: *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* released

April: Beginning rehearsals for the '92-'93 band

May 6: The core band debuts at a Bottom Line industry show

May 9: *Saturday Night Live* is Springsteen's first live television performance, and the public's first look at the new band

Mid- to late-May: Band is filled out with Crystal Taliaferro and additional backing vocalists as rehearsals continue

June 5: Dress Rehearsal radio broadcast from a Hollywood Center Studios soundstage

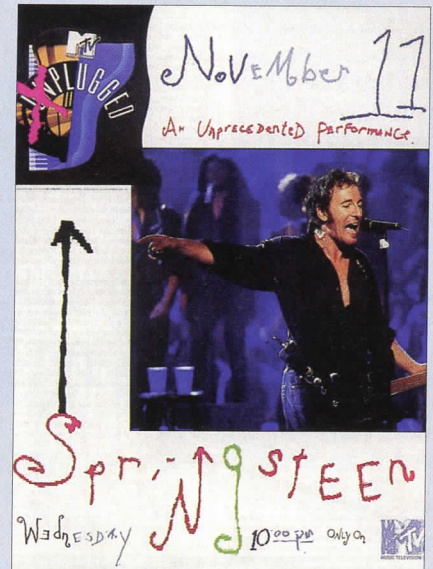
June 15: The '92-'93 Tour begins in Stockholm

July 13: The 15-show European leg closes with the fifth of five nights in London

July 23: The U.S. tour begins at the Meadowlands, with an 11-show arena stand

August 10: The final Meadowlands night, and the only "Rosalita" of the tour

August 13 - September 3: Worcester, MA through Tinley Park, IL



September 22: MTV *Plugged* taping in L.A.

September 24 - December 17: Los Angeles, CA through Lexington, KY

March 23, 1993: Pre-Europe Rehearsal Show in Red Bank, NJ

March 31 - June 1: The second European leg, from Glasgow to Oslo

June 24: The first of two homecoming shows to end the tour: The Concert to Fight Hunger at the Meadowlands Arena, with Clarence Clemons' only performance on this tour

June 26: Kristen Ann Carr Fund Benefit Concert at Madison Square Garden, the final performance by the '92-'93 band

So how intensive were those rehearsals? I mean, you had a lot of material to learn, but had each player learned a lot of that stuff as the auditions went along so that by the time you were rehearsing you knew your parts?

Yeah, everyone was beholden to do their homework, which everyone always did. Even when we started getting on the road and realizing that he was going to be adding in more of the old material. There would be a note at soundcheck, or we would get a note in the morning: listen to such-and-such, maybe "Backstreets" or "Badlands," and have it ready for soundcheck. We would do that, and he would come in and we'd run it at soundcheck, and his only comment would be, "Yep... that's pretty much how that one goes" [laughs].

And then would you play it that night?

We'd play it that night! There was maybe an instance or two where something we would try just wouldn't quite do it, but for the most part, it almost always did. But as for the rehearsals, a lot of it was about sequencing. One of the key elements, looking at the setlist at that point, was seeing different places where "Born in the U.S.A." was put. Where Bruce felt like it needed to be or it didn't need to be, as far as anchoring the show. With him, the sequencing for a record or the putting together of a set was a very personal statement, and so it had to work for him. The intensity of those rehearsals was built on the material we were doing and also the way that it was all put together. And the material that he was choosing to draw from. Once he had embraced what material he was going to draw on from the past, which largely was from *Darkness*—and we played "The River," but I don't think we played much else off of that double album—the tour was taking a tone from the material: "Souls of the Departed," "Born in the U.S.A." as a segue where that was going to lead into "Light of Day"... there was an emphasis that was important to him. It's like when you're mixing a song. You've got all these different tracks that you need to mix into a stereo mix, and ultimately it needs to sound like a record. It can't sound like a group of individual things—just like yeah, okay, it sounds like this is loud enough and that's quiet enough. There has to be some glue to it.

That would apply to a setlist and also apply to the band, I would think. When did you feel that the band was really a band, or firing on all cylinders?

When we did *Plugged*, which was after a break—we had done Europe, we had done the Meadowlands and a few more, and then we had taken a break. And then we came back and the first thing we did was this MTV *Plugged* thing, and I remember feeling soon afterwards that I wish we had done this a bit later. I wished we had gotten a little more under our belt before recording that moment in time. So I think it

was a little bit later on, which was getting on into the fall of '92, where things just kind of found their own rhythm. Not to say that everything leading up to that hadn't all felt right at the time, but looking back it, maybe we were still "gluing."

There are several points on that tour that I imagine must have felt like trial by fire: one being *Saturday Night Live*, and the other being that 11-night stand at the Meadowlands, back on Bruce's home turf. Were those difficult shows to do? Or at least nerve-wracking?

The incredible thing about the whole experience was that Bruce defused any of that by his faith in what we were doing. So in a way, *Saturday Night Live* was such a rush—because it was, doing national live TV, and this was his big coming out. But it also just was what it was. It was just a recorded moment in time.

He made us feel like our nerves shouldn't be any greater than his were. And with the Meadowlands, I think having already done Europe, the Meadowlands was just exciting. It was like doing a stint on Broadway or something. We lived at the Meadowlands for about a month, because of his schedule of not doing more than two shows in a row without at least one day off and often two days off. We were doing, maximum, four shows a week, and so we were there for the better part of a month.

For me, fortunately, I could commute from my home on the Jersey/Pennsylvania border. So those shows weren't intimidating, and although obviously it was the beginning of playing in the U.S. with him, maybe we were blissfully naive of some of the expectations.

We were just enjoying the moment—because it was such a huge moment. I'm driving by the Meadowlands every night [seeing the sign]: "Welcome Home, Bruce!" And for me, just the sheer enjoyment of being able to make this available to people, to acquaintances, just being able to share it in that way.

One thing about working with him which was always great was how he would get on and off stage. And also the fact that he never missed a soundcheck—he was always there. Sometimes people would arrive after he did and he would just wait, but he never lost his cool about anything. But he would always get us on and off stage. The lights would go down when he was ready, obviously, and he would be at the bottom of the stairs underneath the stage and usher us on. Almost like giving us a handshake and a pat on the back as each one of us would go out. He'd be there at the bottom of the steps as well when we came off. And the reason why he was there, we found out, was that at some point, maybe on the *Born in the U.S.A.* tour, a show started with Roy and Nils still upstairs playing ping-pong [laughs]. Y'know, Bruce got on the stage thinking that the whole band was there, he counts off "Born in the U.S.A."—and it's just Danny Federici doing his glockenspiel part:

"daaah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dahhhh!" Without the big keyboard thing, which Roy was doing. And Roy and Nils are hearing this from upstairs, and they're playing ping-pong [laughs].

And freaking out, I assume.

Yes! And that was the last time, apparently, that Bruce ever went on stage without being assured of the fact that everybody else was on stage, too.

Taking attendance, doing a head count...

Yes, that's right—and doing his head count it would always be done with the utmost good grace.

You mentioned being able to hook up your friends with tickets and that kind of thing. How much of this on a very basic level was a thrill for you in that way? Were you a Springsteen fan going into this, and were there moments when you felt like, "Pinch me, I'm in Bruce's band"?

I think one of the things that helped Bruce was that none of us—Tommy, Zack nor myself—had been fans per se beforehand. So we didn't come with that kind of impetus. Out of the three of us, I was probably most aware of some of what he had done—not necessarily a lot of it. I'd always heard about Springsteen's shows; I'd never been to one. I'd heard about the experience of what it was. Tommy and Zack were even less familiar. You don't need to be in his presence long, although he doesn't impose on the situation, he's just one of those people that has this large presence, and you don't need to be around him long to feel that.

So yeah, I was aware of how big this was, and in that regard... I mean, I came to America wanting to play with American musicians, and that was in '76. This was now '92. So it was like, okay, I think I'm doing that now [laughs]. I think I've achieved that basic goal. It doesn't get much more American than this! I knew how big this was for me. And Jon Landau had mentioned to me, it's like he said—it's one thing being in this band at this time. It's another thing being Bruce Springsteen's guitar player—there's a different emphasis that's added on to that.

So that connection and camaraderie that you felt the night that you auditioned for the first time—was that pretty much there the whole time? Were there rough spots?

I think the only rough spots weren't at all to do with the camaraderie. The camaraderie was always there, to the extent that it was a surprise at how much he was into hanging out on the road. He or Terry would call up and say he's going to go out to a gym, do you want to come along? Or he's going to go out and do this... there was always an invitation to join him. He enjoyed the company, and the friendship, and the camaraderie. As the tour went on and as it got closer to the end, the bonding got tighter and tighter.

I think the only times... I think Detroit was the first time where a show hadn't sold out, and it seemed to take people by surprise. I never spoke to Bruce about it, but it was one of those things that seemed to be an oddity. I remember that was a low point in some way, just in my own perception... "Wow, it's hard to imagine that we wouldn't be filling the arena tonight."

But in every regard, as far as the morale and friendship that was instilled from that first moment, I





HONORARY NEW JERSEYIANS: The 1992-'93 band, plus one, at the Meadowlands, August 1992. Back row, L-R: Zack Alford, Carol Dennis, Bobby King, Angel Rogers. Front row, L-R: Tommy Simms, Cleo Kennedy, Fontayne, Springsteen, Patti Scialfa, Roy Bittan, Crystal Taliaferro, and Gia Ciambotti.

can honestly say that it endured. To the point where I'm still in touch with him and other people in the organization—it endures in the same way. And I can literally say I'm walking in his shoes [laughs], thanks to a gift that he gave me at the end of a tour.

You've got a pair of Bruce's shoes?

Yeah, it's funny, actually. Just before the end of the tour in '93, in Europe, I remember I had gone backstage—I had bought a gift for him. It wasn't something big, but I'd just given it to him, and he received it with such a kind of happiness. And about 20 minutes later in the band dressing room, Terry Magovern came in with a pair of his boots and said, "He wants you to have these." And I went back into his dressing room and I said, "Do you mind if I wear these tonight?" And he said, "No, knock yourself out!"

So they even fit you?

They fit. And it was a pair of boots—these calf-skin boots which he had hand made, with the metal toe caps and the buckles and the chains....

The last time I saw him was in L.A. on this [Rising] tour, and I went in to give him my CD. He and I sat down for ten or 15 minutes and chatted. He pulled up his shirt and he said, "You know, I never thought I was going to see this body again!" [Laughs.] He looked great! I said, "Wow, how are you doing that?"

And what's the secret?

His secret, and something that I adopted soon after—he said, "I stopped eating bread."

Really? Low carb...

He was still allowing himself some carbs, I think, but the bread in particular—you cut that out, and that with the exercise... because I think he approaches it kind of like a prize fighter, in terms of getting himself

in shape. I mean, he had abs, and he was contoured like he had been in '92.

One of the closing things he said at the end of the ['92-'93] tour was, "Don't be a stranger." It was, in some ways, hard to take somebody up on that request. To know where you fit in, or how you can fit in—or does somebody really mean that? But yeah, he's somebody that you take at his word.

And how about the rest of the band? Is there anybody from that period that you were close with or are close with now? Did anybody keep in touch?

Zack and I usually stay in touch with Christmas cards and stuff. I haven't talked to Tommy in a long time. I saw Roy on tour, so it was fun to catch up. I haven't really stayed in touch with anybody else. But then I remember meeting Nils when I was in the band (and he was with Ringo [Starr] at the time) and not



really getting to know him, but more recently just kind of hanging out and chatting—and listening to our own CDs, and we had a point of connection there.

I spoke with Nils for *Backstreets* not too long ago, and one thing we talked about was what he's doing now, as far as having his own label and releasing his own music. I got the impression from him that it was very satisfying and liberating in a lot of ways but also a lot of work and kind of scary from time to time.

Yes, it's all of those things. I would expect that for him, what's he's doing is probably the perfect balance, to be able to be on the road and to be enjoying this tour, and then afterwards to keep doing whatever he's doing. I played at the Saint in Asbury Park just recently, these last few weeks, connecting with Bruce fans there and not necessarily knowing what to expect. But everyone was so great—it was great to meet all the Springsteen fans that were there that wanted to come up and say hi or to have me sign stuff from the tour.

How much of your audience right now do you think is familiar with you from your time playing with Bruce?

It's funny—it's more than I realized. There are a lot of people that remember me from that, or from Lone Justice, or from other things that I've done. But working with Bruce over that year put me in front of a large audience. And as part of that band, we just had the blissful inner track of knowing that it was what he wanted at that time in his career. And which, in some ways, I guess made it palatable or workable for him to be able to reenergize himself as far as working in the E Street Band again.

That's true—it certainly seems that he needed that time to pursue other things, and to work with other musicians. At the time, though, did you feel resistance from fans? It was certainly there; was it something that

you were buffered from, or did you ever feel that?

No, we were aware of it. I would say probably buffered to an extent, again, by the absolute knowledge that this was what he was looking for at that time, that it was always perfectly, totally sanctioned by him—that this was what he was doing. While he always had total respect for the fans, this was what he wanted to do, and I was just being a part of that.

At that time, for fans who would be around us on a more personal, physical level—maybe around hotels or whatever—I always wanted to make myself as available to people as they wanted to have us, or me, be available. I was happy to meet people, and happy to listen to whatever stories people had or their opinions about it. If he hadn't been so certain of us, then yeah, it would have been a different matter. But I didn't have to worry about that. He was certainly aware of the resistance of a lot of the fans. You know, it's understandable—I mean, he spoke in technical terms, even about us when we were talking about the staging at the beginning of the tour—just pointing out that people don't like change. And he would just kind of laugh it off.

I think that the E Street Band reunion has been an incredible thing, and I know these tours have been really successful, but I think it's a good thing to remember that it would not be happening right now—I firmly believe—if Bruce had not allowed himself to take the time to do other things and work with other people. And after the tour that you did, he went on his solo acoustic tour, which was another two, two-and-a-half year affair that allowed him to really do something different.

Which is also something that he talked about at that time—something that he had always wanted to do.

Is that right? What about the MTV *Plugged* show? Obviously it wound up being electric,

but was it considered or ever rehearsed as an acoustic show?

I think maybe at the beginning. This was in the wake of the Clapton and Rod Stewart shows that had been so successful, and I think the idea was to do that. But then because we were coming straight back off of a break—there was the three-week break [in September '92] and then we came back and did the MTV thing....

Bruce often decided to do something at the last moment. There would be a minimum amount of heads-up time for people. And he was able to do that—because he could do that. It's like when he and I were out on the road, we were in somewhere in Europe, and it was just him and me; the plane was leaving in about half an hour, and I was reminding him about it. And he said, "You know, I don't think it's going to leave without me" [laughs]. So we just enjoyed whatever we were doing, and then we got to the plane, and everybody was on it, and he and I got on and we took off.

So in the same way, he was able to do what he wanted to do, basically. There had been thought given to doing it acoustically, but we didn't have the lead time available to rehearse stuff in that format. At which point I think he just decided to go ahead—he would play "Red Headed Woman," and that would be the "unplugged" part of the show. And the rest would be "plugged."

As you look back on that tour, what stands out? Whether it's a particular show or a particular song that you enjoyed playing, what sticks with you?

Paradoxically, one of the highlights of the show on a nightly basis for me would be when Bruce and Roy played "Thunder Road." I used to love sitting on the side of the stage—I'd sit on the steps there and just take in the whole moment. It was at that moment that I would get, as much as any time, the power of what was going on. Other standout moments: there's the mania of being in Italy, or Spain, which is just over the top—unbridled love, grown men crying, all that kind of experience. That fervor. And also [at the penultimate show of the tour], when Clarence came out. He was the last one—everyone else from the E Street Band had come on stage and played at some point or other. Clarence was the last one, and this was the very end of the tour. We played "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," and at the appropriate moment—you know, "the Big Man joined the band"—Clarence came up the steps onto the stage. I had never heard anything like it. Never heard a response like it before. It was spine-tingling.

And then you've got the other memories: of "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town," and all of the wackiness of a Springsteen show, just making it whatever the seasonal needs might be. Or playing "Rosalita" at the last show at the Meadowlands.

Was there a similar reaction that night?

Yeah, there was always appropriate punctuation. With that song we had just learned it, we only rehearsed it that day. And it was obviously the most complicated thing that we ever played.

Sure, there are so many sections to that song. And that's why comparing your band to the E Street Band is a tricky business—when you performed a song for the first time on the tour, it was really for the first time. To wing a song like "Rosalita," with no real prior experience with it...

Yeah, but we did it—we pulled it off that night. It was the one time — and I think we knew it even at that point—that was the one time that we were going to play that song on that tour.

Logistically, how did something like that work? Did you basically have to lug around the entire catalog of Springsteen albums just in case you were asked to learn a particular song on a particular day?

Any "lugging around" was done by other people [laughs].

That's another perk, I guess, right?

One of the beauties of being on the road [with Bruce] was putting your luggage out in the hallway and then seeing it at the next hotel. But a lot of the stuff that we were listening to or learning from was off of the *Live/75-'85* compilation—so we were learning from the live records, in part. Although with "Rosalita," I'm sure we must have learned that from the disc. And also I'm thinking that even though it was back in '92, I think CDs might have even been burned for us if there were tracks that we needed to learn. Obviously, whatever we needed was made available.

And as far as musical direction—whether on a night like that when you were playing something new, or during the course of a normal show—did that mostly come from Springsteen? Or was Roy, being an old hand, sort of somebody else to look to? How did that work? You talked about "directing traffic"...

Roy's workload probably doubled, in that he was handed what he and Danny had done, to a large part. On things like "Born in the U.S.A.," Roy was playing the part which Danny had played while he was upstairs playing ping-pong, and also what he himself usually played, too. We were hearing on the tour that Bruce was playing more guitar than he had played in years—that was what I heard quite a lot. But still, obviously, a lot of his music was very keyboard-centric. So Roy was a great anchor. For the most part, though, Bruce would punctuate with his body language and direct in that way.

No matter how many shows you see, it's still fun to watch the subtle hand movements—all eyes are on those hands.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, just a great bandleader in that regard, being able to be a conductor as well. There were several songs where he wouldn't play—on something like "Hungry Heart," or on "The River" he might start off with a harmonica, and then he'd just cruise the stage. Or on "Leap of Faith" he'd toss his guitar halfway through the song and be diving into the crowd, whatever it was. But still, his whole body language was as much conductor as well as singer and bandleader. And, again, there was a basic set—from which he always had the potential to deviate, but there was a basic structure that we fell into as time

went on, so we knew the ebb and flow of what was going to happen.

I've wanted to ask you: We sometimes don't know what to call that band, other than "The '92-'93 Band." Did you ever have name for yourselves, whether it was a joke or not?

There was never, ever an in-house kind of name that we had. Maybe partly in some kind of unspoken respect to the other band, we didn't have any form of reference for ourselves. We certainly didn't want to be presumptuous in that regard—and, you know, not taking it that seriously either. We were just subject to whatever the foibles of the fans might have been, for putting a name on us [laughs]....

[Laughs.] Let's just call it the '92-'93 Band.

BEYOND THE BAND

So after the tour, you did do some recording with Bruce, is that right?

Yes, in '94.

What can you tell me about a '94 record?

The record, which was made and which he had sequenced, was ready to release, but it was shelved. I came in, and it was a shock—I mean, this was after "Streets of Philadelphia," and it was a shock for me to get a phone call from his office one day: "Could you come to L.A. tomorrow?" What?! I said, "Sure!"

turned into four or five, then there were more and more. I spent several days recording with him, with Chuck Plotkin and Toby Scott, while mixing was going on for some of the other stuff across town with Bob Clearmountain.

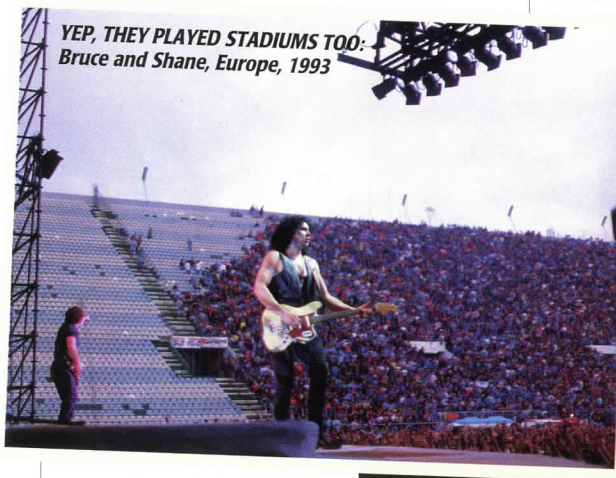
They had a deadline they were trying to meet. And so there was this frantic, frantic activity, where Bruce was trying to get the recording finished. I mean, I was playing guitar on stuff, trying different ideas, trying stuff with Chuck Plotkin (and getting on great with Chuck); Bruce would come in and would want to try some other stuff, and we'd keep recording; I did some backing vocals.... and in the end, this was the record that was going to be coming out.

Can you describe the sound?

It had a hip-hop edge to it. And I thought the material was great. Aside from the rush of recording with him, it also was just a great-sounding record. When I've talked to him about it over the years, he always brings it up and says that he still thinks about releasing it. But at the time, I heard that Jon Landau had felt that lyrically it "wasn't there." That's what I seem to remember. Meaning what, I'm not sure. But that seemed to be what the emphasis was about: was this the next statement that was going to be made? "I'm not sure...." And Jon—for Bruce, that relationship runs deep. I don't think there are that many people, certainly, who have had that influence on him throughout his career. And obviously Jon's influence, literary or otherwise, has been well documented in terms of what helped opened up the doors within Bruce in the early days.

Sure, from movies to books to...

Exactly. So at that point, yeah, it seemed a surprise. It was a shock—



YEP, THEY PLAYED STADIUMS TOO: Bruce and Shane, Europe, 1993

I guess you really never know when that call is going to come, do you?

You never know when it's going to come. I came out, and the record was largely recorded. It was as yet unmixed, but as I say, he had a sequence in mind, which I know for him had been such a crucial thing with any records that he made—the sequencing of it, to have it tell the story that he wanted it to present. The fact that he had done this before mixing seemed like such a point of sureness.

So I came in, and he wanted me to play on a couple of tracks—a couple of tracks



DEBORAH L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

because there was a deadline being met, mixes were being done and recording was being done, and then it was shelved. And that's when *Greatest Hits* replaced it—presumably they wanted some new Bruce record to come out.

In time for the Grammys, we figure?

I guess something like that. This was the end of the year when we were working, so yeah. And that was when the reforming of the E Street Band began.

How much of a personal disappointment was that, as far as doing this recording and then having it not come out?

You know, it was probably pretty big. I don't remember specifically. I remember there being talk at that time about him going out again, on the road, and touring, presumably—the idea was touring with this new record. And I certainly felt that it was an opportunity which was possible. Again, with Bruce you aren't going to know until he knows, and then you get the phone call, "Can you do this tomorrow?"

There's always that cycle of beginning, middle, and completion. And after any "wrapping up," then it's like, okay, what next? So at the end of the ['92-'93] tour there was a huge "reentry" into life: knowing that there will again be another day where I will be carrying my own luggage [laughs] or I will be tuning my own guitar. But the reality is, you can't really prepare yourself for it until it happens.

So, with [this recording session], it was such a gift. We were recording at his house in L.A. and a little bit at the Record Plant, too, I think it was. I wasn't expecting to go and play on Bruce's new record, and to be asked to do that. ... and again, we were driving around town together and having dinner at his place. I'm sure it was a disappointment when the record wasn't at least released. But it was just a time to move on again.

I still have high hopes that that record will come out. I've always really liked the way that "Streets of Philadelphia" incorporated that hip-hop beat. When you talk about a "hip-

hop" sound, are you talking about that sort of thing?

From my memory of it, it was a logical progression. There was certainly a thread from there, infusing a Springsteen song with that rhythmic element, that was running through this record. Whether it was looping some drum parts, or something like that. ... It had a sound; it had a vibe; it had the material. And, again, because of his sureness, the sequence of the record, you felt that he knew that this was an album.

There was a vision there?

He knew it was a body of work, exactly.

Do you recall any song titles?

One, "Waiting on the End of the World." Which to my knowledge was going to be the title of the record.

On your discography—and I was wondering if this was part of those same sessions, this was news to me—you're listed as playing guitar on the *Jerry Maguire* soundtrack version of "Secret Garden."

And that takes me by surprise as much as anybody else. Yeah, we did a version of "Secret Garden" for that record. And it was only seeing the session report that was filed for the *Jerry Maguire* movie that told me that I was on that recorded version.

And now, on the road, I hear that on this recent run you've been doing "I'm on Fire"

I started this tour off in Duluth, Minnesota, and I asked the audience that night, "Does everybody who comes through here play a Dylan song?" Because I had started to toy around with playing "Blowing in the Wind." When I got to Jersey, I wondered if I would have the nerve to try playing a Springsteen song. And I tried it a couple of different ways. I'm out performing on my own at the moment, doing a lot of this solo, not with a band. And I'm able to create real-time loops to accompany myself, which allows me to punctuate what I'm doing—which is how I prefer to play the guitar anyway. So I set up different loops to try different things for "I'm on Fire"—which we did several times [on the '92-'93 tour]. That was another song that Bruce would not play on, it would just start with guitar and drums and with that single-note keyboard line that Roy would sustain. A couple of times it was the first song of the second set—we were still doing two sets, as opposed to the one long set which he's doing now—and "I'm on Fire" would start off the second set. It was a song I always enjoyed. It's just such a great guitar line, to start. I steered away from the signature riff until the end of the song, when I was playing it. It was a short song, it was a song that was easy enough to sing, and one that didn't seem too invasive, being there in Asbury Park on "home turf."

That's true, as opposed to doing "Rosalita."

Exactly, or something that was going to be... just wrong [laughs]. For me, to go back to Asbury Park and play a show, it was kind of a big thing. We were aware of a lot of emotion for the fans of the '92-'93 band—as we now finally, definitively, officially have named that band [laughs]. And it was just great. It was great for me to meet some of the local fans who were such big fans, and to have it be a positive experience. I wouldn't say it's like coming full circle, it's not that, but it helps that you're addressing some kind of unfinished business.

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT:
July 9, 1992, London



DEBORAH L. ROTHENBERG PHOTO

Asbury was just one stop on a pretty extensive touring schedule you've lined up for yourself.

Yes, it's about as grassroots as it gets. I did a swing that took me through a lot of the East Coast-based radio stations that have been playing my new CD. And then I've been doing shows—different things, including the Saint and the Bottom Line—in between the radio appearances, and doing some in-store stuff as well. It was a great way for me to make use of the end of summer and to get out and promote the CD when radio play was as good as it has been.

Radio has been treating the record pretty well?

It's been great, actually. I've been promoting it to the non-commercial AAA stations, which means the NPR stations, basically. It was one of the kind of flagship stations out here, KCRW, that first picked it up. And at that point it felt like an appropriate audience. It was [KCRW Program Director and "Morning Becomes Eclectic" host] Nic Harcourt that really kind of picked it up in the first place, so I started with radio promotion in that area. And with promotion being what it is, and the amount of money involved, it also, thankfully, is the least expensive format. Commercial radio—AAA or Top 40 or whatever—is a whole different thing. And for me to be doing this independently, which is what I've been doing, it certainly is more realistic and more affordable.

So yeah, I've never been so busy in my life. It's a whole different career. I mean, my job right now is to get out there and promote my CD. For my own life. It's up to me to get out there and promote it as much as I can, and I would certainly like for Bruce's audience to at least be aware that it exists and then to make an open-minded evaluation on that. It's all that one can really hope for.

I've been spending a lot of time with the *What Nature Intended*, enjoying it a lot, and I noticed in the liner notes that you mentioned *The Artist's Way* [Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*, a renowned guide to unlocking the creative process]. I was wondering when you discovered it, what kind of impact it had on you, and if it was a catalyst for doing your own record?

It was huge. A friend of mine, Freebo—he's a bass player, who played on the early Bonnie Raitt records, which I was a huge fan of—found himself in a similar position. He was making his own CD, getting out there performing solo. He introduced me to *The Artist's Way*—I've been doing my morning pages [three pages of daily writing, part of the core of the program] every morning now for four years. It's become such a pivotal part of my day. I wish that I would keep up with more aspects of the book, but it was so huge in giving me a nurturing kind of base. There was a comfort zone in doing what I'd always been doing, and

it seemed like doing a high-wire act, moving from the side of the stage to the center of the stage. So the tools that book gave me... I guess I assimilated them to a sufficient enough degree where I felt, yeah, I can

do this—it's almost like a 12-step program—on a day-to-day basis. I'm not starting out by looking at the end product; I'm dealing with today as today and seeing where that leads me. I'm surrounding myself with people that support my growth, which was huge.

And then—the bottomless pit of finances [laughs]: this is going to cost this much, you know: "Oh, you want to record!" "So, you want to promote your record!" But you're committed to it at that point—and sometimes you feel like you should be committed. But it's all worth it.

One of the most gratifying things for me, working with Bruce, was that I was working with somebody who so embodied a spiritual vision. There was somebody who was out there talking about things that were important, and making music that wasn't just some kind of show-biz, fantasy, extravaganza type thing... of course, it was that as well. But, every night, it was an experience where he was moving through stories and events, through these songs that just had life running through them. For me it wasn't just getting

paid to play, like, "What the hell am I doing this for? Oh well, at least I'm getting paid to do it." Fortunately I haven't really been involved in much of that in my career. But [working with Bruce] was taking it to the top of the pedestal.

To feel that I was working with somebody with such integrity was the biggest thing that I got from that experience. Which also stood me in good stead, knowing that one's vision of the world could be... that there was a possibility of being able to document that in songs in a way which could move people without preaching to them. Still within the format of the rock 'n' roll song, or the pop song, this medium of conveying whatever it is that *The Artist's Way* has freed up in you, to be able to get that out. This is my medium of expression today. And then having the empowerment of finding a

response to it—an audience, people wanting to buy the CD, people supporting it.

And you've always got those boots you can put on if you need some extra inspiration.

It's funny, looking down the road ten years from where I've been—and the experience of Bruce pulling up his shirt and saying to me, "I never thought I'd see this body again"—it's nice that I'm in good shape for the age that I'm at. My hair is shorter, the pants are looser, the shoes are squarer these days than they were ten years ago. It's interesting to look back and just to know that it was a pivotal moment—but still it's just part of who you are on whatever road is leading you to wherever you're going. As important and life changing as it was, and yeah, it was a major turn in the road, it still feels good to be where I'm at and continue doing what I'm doing right now. 🐾

Visit Shane's website at www.shanefontayne.com



GETTING BACK TO NATURE:
Minneapolis Zoo Amphitheater, August, 2003

Setting out on something like this I found that, understandably, a lot of people that I knew seemed to be comfortable keeping me in a place where they view me to be, or in a role that they felt comfortable relating to. So you're carving out this new identity for yourself and you want to say, "No, can't you see?!" But you can't just bully people into that. So it takes surrounding yourself with people that are going to support that development. It's like incarnating into a new skin.

Did *What Nature Intended* come pretty easily after that?

It's like where our discussion began—it wasn't something I've always wanted to do, but once the idea came to me, I was inspired to write again and develop that muscle. So I started recording one or two things, and I said, "I guess this could become a record," and it started taking on a life of its own. Soon enough it does, and one thing leads to another.

ON COLLECT ING

By Fred Mills



Midnight Run... In Firenze

(Anubis 3CDR)

VENUE: Stadio Artemio Franchi

CITY: Florence (Firenze), Italy

DATE: June 8, 2003

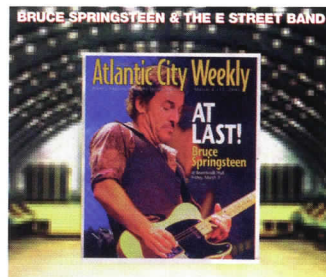
SOUND QUALITY: 7.5

PERFORMANCE: 9

PACKAGING: 9

For Anubis' latest numbered edition of 99 copies, the label tapped a good (but not flawless) audience tape that fully conveys the bordering-on-hysteria vibe only an Italian crowd can muster. Maybe "hysteria" is the wrong term. "Enthusiastic," yes; occasionally "over-the-top," definitely; frequently "foaming at the mouth like a pack of rabid dogs," oh yeah. The electricity kicks in early when, after "Night," folks start chanting during the intro vamp of "My Love Will Not Let You Down." Several songs later, the stadium simply explodes with the "Badlands"/"Out in the Street" double-punch. And the wave of recognition that hits as the E Streeters edge into "Tougher Than the Rest" (its only performance on the Euro 2003 leg) is pretty startling.

The crowd noise is audible during many moments, loud, soft, or otherwise, so be forewarned. Also note that while the sound early in the show fluctuates and has some midrange "tininess," the quality steadily improves across the three discs. This isn't the best-sounding set that Anubis has released, but the label goes to great pains to clean its tapes up, and an "average" Anubis trumps a "great" Brand X Label product any day of the week. The color artwork is very nice, too: a pair of two-sided tray panels and an eight-page booklet, with photos from the show itself plus reprints of some Italian press accounts of the concert.



Atlantic City Night

(Crystal Cat 3CD)

Atlantic City 2003

(Coffee Tea Or Me 3CDR)

VENUE: Boardwalk Hall

CITY: Atlantic City, NJ

DATE: March 7, 2003

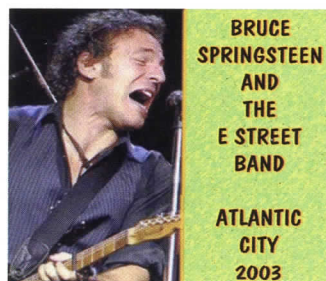
SOUND QUALITY: 8.5 / 7

PERFORMANCE: 10

PACKAGING: 10 / 5

As we noted on Backstreets.com, this was "a true Jersey-style house party... bookended with Atlantic City treats, but from start to finish it was one for the ages." Those treats included opening with "Atlantic City" and closing with "Roll of the Dice" (plus the old "Miss America" theme over the PA—somewhere, Bert Parks is weeping for joy). If that weren't enough, Bruce performs the Garden State National Anthem—no, not "Born to Run," but "Jersey Girl." The cover of the Beatles' "Tell Me Why" also makes this a must-hear show.

So what we have here are competing releases. It's not much of a match-up, however. To date, upstart CDR label Coffee Tea Or Me hasn't endeared itself to collectors, seemingly issuing anything it gets its hands on, with bare-bones packaging. (To be fair, sources say that scenario is improving.) Just two single-sided tray panels for this release, no booklet. The sound quality is lackluster, as well—lots of crowd noise and boominess, tinny vocals, occasional muffling, etc. Some points for some bonus tracks, however. Rounding out disc three are two TV appearances: "The Rising" and "London Calling" from this year's Grammys,



and the "Kitty's Back"/"Merry Christmas Baby" mini-set from Conan O'Brien last December.

Crystal Cat, of course, did its usual exemplary job in the packaging, particularly with the booklet. Included are reprints of the Bruce-themed front covers of NJ magazines *Jersey Alive* and *At the Shore*, and a review from the *Asbury Park Press*. CC also located a far better recording: it's full-bodied, with a lot of dynamic depth, very clear vocals and toned-down crowd noise. Disc three includes a whopping 11 bonus tracks lifted from seven 2002 dates, including "Viva Las Vegas" (Las Vegas 8/18), "I Fought the Law" (w/ Don Henley, Dallas 11/3) and "Because the Night" (w/ Dave Stewart and Bono, Miami 11/23).



Helsinki Rising: Second Evening

(Piggyback 3CDR)

VENUE: Olympic Stadium

CITY: Helsinki, Finland

DATE: June 17, 2003

SOUND QUALITY: 8

PERFORMANCE: 9

PACKAGING: 9

This is one of the more unusual sets from the Euro Rising stadium tour, boasting a significantly different song lineup from the previous night at the same venue. Songs such as "You're Missing" and "Born in the U.S.A." are dropped, and a revamped, full-band version of "The River" turns up. Other memorable moments come in "Candy's Room" and "Cadillac Ranch." The audience recording is very good, given the sonic logistics of the outdoor venue, though it's quite a boisterous audience, with a fair amount of crowd noise in the vicinity of the taper. At the beginning of disc two "Cadillac Ranch" fades in, already slightly in progress.

Note the hybrid label name: this release is a team-up release from Piggyback and Anubis, two of the Springsteen specialty labels that issue limited-edition, high-quality pro-CDRs. Per

those two labels' tradition, the artwork is extra-fine, with picture labels for the discs and full-color, smartly-designed artwork (two one-sided tray panels, four-panel booklet).



Feyenoord Stadion Night

(Crystal Cat 3CD)

VENUE: Feyenoord Stadion

CITY: Rotterdam, Holland

DATE: May 8, 2003

SOUND QUALITY: 8.5

PERFORMANCE: 9

PACKAGING: 10

Despite the absence of Patti, the E Streeters were up to the night's task at hand. Well, most of them: as noted last issue, Clarence's solo for "Out in the Street" was, er, less than tuneful. That glitch dispensed of early on in the show, however, it was full steam ahead. High points include the acoustic "Darkness," a moving "Racing in the Street," and a crazed "Dancing in the Dark" finale that clearly left the Dutch crowd wanting more. Crystal Cat includes ten bonus tracks from the previous show, on May 6—a show that lagged, performance-wise, compared to the full concert captured here. But songs not repeated on May 8 fill this set out nicely, with the likes of "Born in the U.S.A." (acoustic), "No Surrender," "Out in the Street," "Countin' on a Miracle," "Incident" (on piano), "Thunder Road" and "Bobby Jean."

Sound quality is very good, with no audible problems or intrusive crowd noise, although judging by the bonus tracks, the tape of May 6 turned out "hotter." Packaging also meets the usual high CC standards, and the photos appear to have been taken at the actual concert—one shot in the booklet is of Bruce hanging upside down on his mic stand. Nice touch. 🍷

Backstreets does not endorse the illegal sale of bootleg recordings, nor can we advise as to their legality or how they may be obtained.

The tour may be over, but the burning goes on. When Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band left the stage on October 4, 2003, CDR collectors and traders knew that their fun would continue in seeking out the best recordings of the just-completed tour. That search would not go unrewarded, as every show from the North American stadium tour is now circulating. Some surfaced earlier than others: an excellent recording of the opening show, July 15 at Giants Stadium, was posted to ABMS (the alt.binaries.music.springsteen newsgroup) by the end of that week, setting a very high bar for the rest of the tour in terms of speed. Amazingly, that recording would also be the best-sounding one to surface so far from the entire ten-night Meadowlands stand. Although there would be competition: a recording of the July 18 show, recorded with high-end Schoeps microphones, began circulating in early- to mid-September and it ranks second only to the July 15 recording.

As the tour continued into August, not only were the shows improving, but the recordings improved as well. An excellent copy of the August 2 show from Foxboro was quickly posted to ABMS, and the second and third Philly shows (August 9 and 11) were also posted relatively quickly, both in above-average quality. The first Philly show, August 8, took a while to circulate, but it proved to be worth the wait.

The second show at historic Fenway Park, on September 7, provided not only the tour debut of "Frankie," but also a high-quality recording. Some consider that show to be among the best, if not the best, of the tour, and it would be hard to disagree after listening to this one. The September 13 show at FedEx Field is circulating in a very close and warm recording, but several chatters near the taper (oh, the curse of stadium shows!) keep it from being considered excellent.

Another major highlight was the September 18 show in Hartford, CT, as not only did the setlist feature three songs from the overlooked *Lucky Town*, but an excellent recording was posted very quickly to ABMS by the taper known as "Bakerstuff." The first Hartford show, with the live debut of "Let's Be Friends," later circulated, but the sound isn't up to the standard set by September 18.

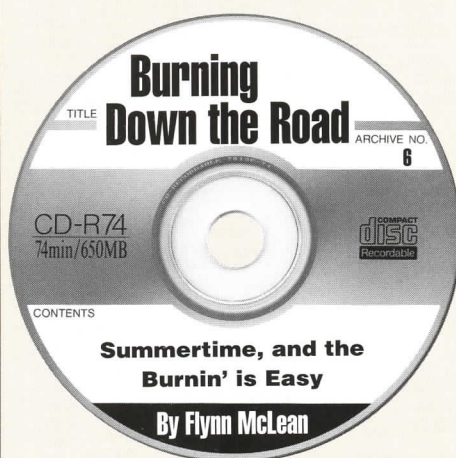
For the last two months of the tour, all but two shows featured at least one tour debut. The September 20 show in Buffalo, NY provided two huge surprises: in addition to playing "Tunnel of Love" for the first time in almost 15 years, Bruce also pulled out "County Fair," the near-legendary "Born in the U.S.A." outtake, for the first time ever. Jaws dropped from coast to coast as the set list was posted online, and the taper known as "Bickle" posted a near-excellent recording to ABMS within days of the show.

Another recording deserving mention is the September 25 show in Denver, CO, as the quality could rival Crystal Cat releases. In a tragic twist of fate, the collector who seed-

ed this recording among members of the newsgroup RMAS passed away just days after sending out copies, making that recording somewhat bittersweet.

All three shows from the tour-ending Shea Stadium stand are circulating, with the October 4 show in excellent quality. The October 3 show, another Bakerstuff recording, is slightly above average; a strong recording of the first night has yet to circulate.

The biggest gap in the North American stadium tour recordings is the August 31 show, with no strong document of that night despite at least three different tapes. One, the Bickle recording, suffered from channel drop outs, and several people attempted fixes—replacing the lost channel with the existing channel, which resulted in periods of mono—which proved to be the best solution. A highly-touted Schoeps recording surfaced



as well, but while the sound is warm and full, the taper was sitting among too many chatters to get a great recording.

In addition to getting their recordings out quickly, both Bickle and Bakerstuff are doing what more tapers and collectors should be doing—identifying their recordings. With several tapers in the house at every show, it can be difficult to keep track of different versions, and a way of differentiating them—either with nicknames or description of recording equipment (mics, recorder, taper location)—is extremely helpful.

One collector created a web page (<http://members.megapipe.net/jgenuardi/carrt.htm>) to assist in identifying the different recordings from the *Rising* tour. Titled "Catalog of Audio Recordings," the page lists the known recordings of each show, including track times of the first disc, a short description, and a "fingerprint" unique to each version, usually audience chatter. Recording information is also provided when known. An email address is provided on the page for people to submit comments and information.

Looking further back in 2003, the four (and soon to be five) Crystal Cat releases are, as expected, the best recordings to come out of this year's European tour (see

Backstreets #76 for details on each show). Still, there are a few more which deserve mention. While two versions of the May 10 Ludwigshafen show are circulating, one of them is very close and clear. Two other shows with above-average sound quality are June 10 (Munich) and June 12 (Hamburg).

Going back to early 2003, a three-disc compilation covering the North American and Down Under legs circulated under the title 2003 *Tour Volume 1: Duluth Through Montreal*. With "Volume 1" in the title, one can expect Volumes 2 and even 3 as well.

The last edition of this column—in which the Atlanta 12/2/02 ALD recording was described as not having any competition for best ALD of the tour—had just gone to print when an amazing ALD recording of the 11/24/02 show from Tampa popped up. With a much better setlist ("Does This Bus Stop," "Saint in the City," "Incident") and a better performance than Atlanta, the Tampa recording wins hands down. And to make things even better, Prodigal Son (he of the remastering and remixing) mixed in an audience recording during the few times when the original ALD wasn't flawless, to make an even better set. The 12/2/02 recording was also given a remaster, which was circulated as "Wild Producing."

Several past tours have recently received the compilation treatment from fans. A five-disc *Darkness* tour set was put together by members of the Greasy Lake message board (<http://www.the-circuit.org>), complete with extensive liner notes and a very cohesive approach: a "typical" (extended) show over the first three discs, a disc of covers performed over the course of the tour, and a disc of some of the more unusual songs from the tour. As one would expect, the set draws heavily from the five radio broadcasts and the many circulating soundboards from that tour, resulting in strong sound quality throughout.

Another five-disc set comes from a member of the LiveDaily Springsteen message board, this one covering the 1984-85 tour. Titled *Born in the U.S.A. Revisited*, it takes extensive sequences from the best-sounding sources from that era, including *Kansas City Night*, *Alpine Valley Night*, and *Where the Rivers Meet*.

The 1992-93 tour often receives a bad rap simply because it wasn't Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band. Another compilation puts together mostly non-E Street material into a two-disc set, titled *Sheddin' Skin*. In addition to much of the *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town* material, many of the regular—and not so regular—covers from that tour are included, such as "Many Rivers to Cross," "Settle for Love," and "Satan's Jewel Crown."

The solo acoustic *Tom Joad* tour has also been the subject of a five-disc set. *The Tracks of Tom Joad* compiles all 77 songs performed over the course of the nearly two-year long tour. While the sound quality is top-notch, taken from mostly Crystal Cat releases, the sequencing is in alphabetical order by song title, giving it an unusual feel. 🐾

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Continued from page 5

car wash.) From now on I will never miss another Bruce show in Italy.

Ralf Dissmann
Germany

HERE COMES A REGULAR

Dear Editor:

Once again, the quality work ethic of *Backstreets* has shown through. As the tour comes to a close, I have to say one thing: *Thank you, Backstreets magazine.* I have been a subscriber since just about day one, so I can speak with some authority and experience. Your coverage of this 16-month tour has been exceptional. We wake up in the morning and have dependably found the setlists from around the world on *Backstreets.com*. You have enriched my life and my passion for Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, and I believe I speak for all of the Bruce disciples out there.

Use this as a Letter to the Editor. It's not too corny—someone should say it, and you should print it.

Ralph Petti
Basking Ridge, NJ

Deal. Thanks, Ralph, you made our day. —C.P.

I WILL DARE

Dear Editor:

Bon Jovi on the cover of *Backstreets*? Say it ain't so, Chris, say it ain't so...

Jonathan Mendez
via e-mail

It's like *Bad Medicine*, huh? —C.P.

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